

NAVAL DISARMAMENT.

A Brief Record from the Washington Conference to date

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The Institute, as such, is precluded by its rules from expressing an opinion on any aspect of international affairs. Any opinion expressed in this monograph is, therefore, purely individual.

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PREFACE

DISARMAMENT is fundamentally a political problem. For, in the classical phrase, the use of armaments, that is, war, is but a continuance of policy. If disarmament is to be attained it will only be because the nations have reached an agreement about the political direction of the world in which they live. Nothing short of this will give permanent results.

History bears out this statement almost to the letter. In the last twenty years there have been four principal attempts to limit and reduce armaments. The first was the proposal for a "naval holiday" between Great Britain and Germany which was made in various ways before 1914. It broke down because there was no semblance of agreement between the political aims of the two countries concerned. Each regarded its navy as the instrument of its national policy, and as the aims of their policies were different or irreconcilable, a naval agreement also proved to be impossible.

The second was the Washington Conference of 1921-2. Here there was success where there was a political agreement, failure where there was no political agreement. There was agreement that a collision of battle fleets was unthinkable, and the ratios of battle fleets were fixed without difficulty. There was agreement that "offensive" naval bases in the Pacific should be unfortified—which gave the United States control of the Eastern Pacific, Japan control of Far Eastern waters, and the British Empire control of the Indian Ocean and the approaches to Australasia—and that China should be allowed to work out her own destiny without interference, and the naval problems of the Pacific became soluble. But there was no agreement as to the political relations which should exist between Europe or the League of Nations and the United States, and no agreement about the knotty question generally known as "the freedom of the seas," and it proved to be impossible to reach an agreement about cruisers, destroyers and submarines, and each nation began to build what it regarded as necessary for its own national self-defence.

The third was the Geneva Naval Conference of 1927. Here there was complete failure because there were no political discussions at all. Each side talked vaguely about "parity," but as the principal purpose of cruisers is to protect or destroy trade, and as there was no semblance of agreement as to when either side should have the right to interfere with the trade of the other, whether as mandatory of the League of Nations or on its own account, each Admiralty interpreted "parity" in a form which would give itself the advantage in the event of a dispute, and the Conference ended with a complete naval estrangement between the United States and Great Britain.

The fourth has been the long-drawn-out attempt to carry out Article 8—the disarmament article—of the Covenant of the League of Nations as applied to the land armaments of Europe. But here also there has been no political agreement. Theoretically the Covenant itself constitutes such an agreement, especially when reinforced by the Locarno Treaties. But, in fact, the principal parties do not give their full trust to the Covenant and armaments stay at the figures which each nation feels able to afford.

The success of the London Naval Conference, therefore, depends upon the political understandings which unite its members. The political basis of the Conference is avowedly the Pact of Paris, whereby its members have renounced war altogether as an instrument of national policy and have undertaken to settle their disputes only by pacific means. Four of the parties are also members of the League of Nations, which binds them not only to submit any dispute in which they may be engaged to impartial investigation and report, but also to sever financial and trade relations with any nation which goes to war in defiance of this obligation. What do these treaties mean in practice, for on the answer will depend whether the Conference is able to make a binding treaty for the all-round limitation and reduction of naval armaments, or whether it will fail to reduce naval armaments and only reach an agreement to limit them by agreeing to considerable increases in the present figures.

The Conference itself can alone give an answer, but a few considerations may be worth mentioning. If the treaties are taken at their face value, no nations will want armaments as the instruments of their national policy, but only as means of defence against lawless attack by "aggressor" States. But

the size of the armaments necessary to provide against the risk of aggression, and of the complications which inevitably ensue both on land and on the high seas when war has actually broken out, will obviously depend upon our confidence not only that the Pact of Paris will be lived up to, but that other nations will co-operate in preventing resort to war and the wrongful use of violence if a breach of the Pact occurs. In the international, no less than in the national sphere, peace, in the political sense of the word, depends upon collective willingness both to settle disputed questions by a peaceful appeal to reason and justice and to co-operate in preventing a successful appeal to violence. And that means not only the existence of methods for the settlement of international questions by judicial, arbitral or conciliation process, to which all will subscribe, but that armaments, so far as they exist, are recognised as the instruments for maintaining international peace through the prevention of successful resort to war, as well as for national self-defence.

The success or failure of the London and all other disarmament conferences will depend, therefore, upon the extent to which the ideals which are implicit in the Pact of Paris and the Covenant of the League of Nations can be made to prevail over the older tradition that every nation should possess the armaments which it thinks necessary for self-defence in a world in which war is regarded as lawful or at least as inevitable. The standard of "national needs" inevitably spells competition, with its consequences, international suspicion, alliances and war. For if international issues are to be settled by war, it is only common sense for each nation to try to possess the armaments which will give it victory or at least security when the war comes, that is to say, armaments which are based upon what its neighbours possess and which will enable it to defeat them or at least to make them insecure.

The alternative, the only alternative, is the policy of the Peace Pact and the Covenant, that is to say, the policy of renouncing war altogether as a method of settling international disputes in favour of pacific methods, and of using armaments as the instruments of international as well as of national security and peace. Then and then only will armaments be reduced as well as limited, for the standard will be the strength which is necessary to prevent, by collective action, lawless resort to war instead of the strength which is necessary to defeat

a neighbour in a local war or to obtain victory or security in a world war

It is obvious that the political basis for all-round disarmament will not be easy to reach. It may not be fully attained at the London or even at a later conference. The importance of the London Conference is that it is the first attempt at disarmament which has been made since the universal signing of the Pact of Paris has provided the political foundation on which success can eventually be built

PHILIP KERR

January 1st, 1930

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NAVAL DISARMAMENT

BRIEF RECORD FROM THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
TO DATE¹

INTRODUCTION

THE history of the post-War efforts to effect, by international agreement, the reduction and limitation of naval armaments is considered, in the following monograph, to have begun with the convening of the Conference in Washington in the winter of 1921-22. No survey of the disarmament problem would be complete, however, without a reference to those international engagements entered into during the period of Peace-making by which the principle of the reduction and limitation of armaments was accepted as one of the main objects of national policy and as essential to the prevention of future wars.

The first of these engagements was that entered into by the signatories of the Covenant of the League of Nations when they subscribed to the terms of Article 8. As this Article was inserted in the Covenant with the express purpose of preventing competition in armament preparation and is generally considered to form the basis on which all schemes for disarmament should be worked out, its text is printed herewith:

ARTICLE 8—"The Members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety, and the enforcement by common action of international obligations."

"The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments."

"Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years."

"After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council."

"The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard

¹ More detailed accounts of the matters dealt with in this monograph will be found in the volumes of the *Survey of International Affairs*, to which reference is made in the Bibliography on page 109.

being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety

"The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval, and air programmes and the condition of such of their industries as are adaptable to war-like purposes "

The next landmark was the passing of a Resolution by the Second Assembly of the League in September 1921, by which it was decided

"That the Temporary Mixed Commission be asked to make proposals on general lines for the reduction of national armaments which, in order to secure precision, should be in the form of a draft treaty or an equally definite plan, to be presented to the Council, if possible, before the Assembly next year "

In accordance with this Resolution the Temporary Mixed Commission during its Sessions of the spring and summer of 1922 considered a plan for disarmament, submitted by Lord Esher and based upon the ratio system adopted by the Washington Conference as regards capital ships ✓ This was not regarded as acceptable, principally because it was felt that no scheme could be effective which did not provide some form of mutual security as a *quid pro quo* for the reduction of national armaments : A report to this effect was adopted by the Mixed Commission and was later included in the celebrated Resolution XIV, which was adopted on the report of the Third Committee by the Third Assembly of the League in September 1922. Since this Resolution is often referred to and provided the foundation on which both the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Geneva Protocol for the Settlement of International Disputes were based, its text is reproduced here—

RESOLUTION XIV (a) The Assembly, having considered the report of the Temporary Mixed Commission on the question of a general Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, being of opinion that this report can in no way affect the complete validity of all the Treaties of Peace or other agreements which are known to exist between States, and considering that this report contains valuable suggestions as to the methods by which a Treaty of Mutual Guarantee can be made effective, is of opinion that

✓ 1. No scheme for the reduction of armaments, within the meaning of Article 8 of the Covenant, can be fully successful unless it is general

2 In the present state of the world many Governments would be unable to accept the responsibility for a serious

reduction of armaments unless they receive in exchange a satisfactory guarantee of the safety of their country

3 Such a guarantee can be found in a defensive agreement which should be open to all countries, binding them to provide immediate and effective assistance in accordance with a pre-arranged plan in the event of one of them being attacked, provided that the obligation to render assistance to a country attacked shall be limited in principle to those countries situated in the same part of the globe. In cases, however, where, for historical, geographical, or other reasons, a country is in special danger of attack, detailed arrangements should be made for its defence in accordance with the above-mentioned plan

4 As a general reduction of armaments is the object of the three preceding statements, and the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee the means of achieving that object, previous consent to this reduction is therefore the first condition for the Treaty

This reduction could be carried out either by means of a general Treaty, which is the most desirable plan, or by means of partial treaties designed to be extended and open to all countries

In the former case, the Treaty will carry with it a general reduction of armaments. In the latter case, the reduction should be proportionate to the guarantees afforded by the Treaty

The Council of the League, after having taken the advice of the Temporary Mixed Commission, which will examine how each of these two systems could be carried out, should further formulate and submit to the Governments, for their consideration and sovereign decision the plan of the machinery, both political and military, necessary to bring them clearly into effect

(b) The Assembly requests the Council to submit to the various Governments the above proposals for their observations, and requests the Temporary Mixed Commission to continue its investigations, and, in order to give precision to the above statements, to prepare a draft Treaty embodying the principles contained therein.

I THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE, 1921-22

It is over eight years since the first step was taken towards *Origins* carrying out the policy of naval limitation which has seen its latest development in the calling of the Five Power Naval Conference due to meet in London on the 21st January of this year. It was on the 11th August, 1921, that the Government of the United States of America invited the four principal Allied Powers "to participate in a conference on the limitation of armaments . . ." and on the following 12th November the first plenary session of that Conference met in Washington.

In taking this step there is evidence that the Government was acting in response to a strong current of public opinion. The United States in 1920 was feeling the effects of the economic crisis which attended the process of commercial and industrial readjustment after the War, and public resentment was expressed through various channels at what was felt to be unjustifiable expenditure in building up a large navy after victory had been obtained.

In December 1920 Senator Borah introduced a joint resolution (later embodied in the Naval Supply Bill which was approved on the 12th July, 1921) urging the President to invite Great Britain and Japan to a conference for the purpose of promptly entering into an understanding or agreement by which the naval expenditure of the three Powers should be reduced. The support forthcoming for the idea was widespread and general, so much so that when the resolution came before the Senate on the 26th May, 1921, it was adopted by 74 votes to nil. A month later, on the 29th of June, it passed the House of Representatives by 330 votes to 4. Simultaneously with these developments the Republican Party had in 1920 been emphasising the necessity of the United States entering into some form of association with other nations for the reduction of armaments, and in June 1921 the Republican National Committee had warned its leaders that the party stood to lose a large number of votes unless naval expenditure were reduced. And though construction had been begun on sixteen powerful new battleships, Congress had already shown great reluctance to vote the funds necessary to carry this on.

The Government was, then, giving expression to the trend of opinion throughout the country in issuing the invitation to the Conference,¹ and the initiative thus taken was effectively seconded by the British Empire.

In the summer of 1921, when the intention of the American Government to call a conference had already been announced, the British Imperial Conference then sitting in London passed a resolution which implied acceptance of the standard of equality between the combined naval forces of the British Commonwealth and the navy of any other Power, thus laying the foundation for the adoption of the principle of parity upon

¹ An additional factor in the situation was the naval rivalry arising out of the tension between the United States and Japan over Pacific problems and immigration policy.

which the negotiations between the British and American Governments have been based

The immediate aim of the discussions at Washington was afterwards described in the following terms by the American delegation to the Conference in the report they submitted to the President

"The declared object was, in its naval aspect, to stop the race of competitive building of warships which was in process and which was so distressingly like the competition that immediately preceded the War of 1914. Competitive armament, however, is the result of a state of mind in which a national expectation of attack by some other country causes preparation to meet the attack. To stop competition it is necessary to deal with the state of mind from which it results. A belief in the pacific intentions of other Powers must be substituted for suspicion and apprehension."

At the first plenary session on the 12th November, 1921, Mr *U.S. Charles Evans Hughes* unfolded the American plan for limitation of naval armaments in a speech of great significance, which "at once evoked from the delegates expressions of assent in principle." After referring to the competition in naval programmes as the core of the difficulty, and pointing out how one building programme inevitably led to another, the speaker submitted a plan based upon the following four general principles

- ✓ (1) That all capital shipbuilding programmes, either actual or projected, should be abandoned,
- ✓ (2) That further reduction should be made through the scrapping of certain of the older ships,
- ✓ (3) That, in general, regard should be had to the existing naval strength of the Powers concerned,
- ✓ (4) That the capital ship tonnage should be used as the measurement of strength for navies, and a proportionate allowance of auxiliary combatant craft prescribed

The "existing naval strength" which was to be taken as a starting-point for limitation and reduction by the terms of Point 3 was to include "the extent of construction already effected in the case of ships in process," and this definite and ascertainable quantum was to give the ratio between the several Powers, to the exclusion of ratios based on such hypothetical factors as the estimated needs of a given Power for its naval defence or paper programmes for which there was nothing to show in the way of construction. All ships under

construction were to be scrapped.¹ This starting-point being assumed, the United States Government proposed for its own part to comply with Points 1 and 2 by scrapping 15 capital ships under construction² and 15 of its older existing battleships, with an aggregate tonnage (including that of vessels under construction, if completed) of 845,740 tons, and it suggested that the British Empire and Japan (but not France and Italy) should carry out reductions in the same ratio on the basis of "existing strength" as defined above. As regards details, Mr. Hughes said that it was proposed that Great Britain should stop further construction of the four new "Hoods," and suggested that she should scrap 23 ships (exist-

¹ This was further explained in the Report of the American Delegation to the Conference, which described the method followed in determining the ratios, as follows:

"It was obvious that no agreement for limitation was possible if the three Powers were not content to take as a basis their actual existing naval strength. General considerations of national need, aspirations and expectations, policy and program, could be brought forward by each Power in justification of some hypothetical relation of naval strength with no result but profitless and interminable discussion. The solution was to take what the Powers actually had, as it was manifest that neither could better its relative position unless it won in the race which it was the object of the Conference to end. It was impossible to terminate competition in naval armament if the Powers were to condition their agreement upon the advantages they hoped to gain in the competition itself. There was general agreement that the American rule for determining existing naval strength was correct, that is, that it should be determined according to capital ship tonnage. There was, however, a further question, and that was as to what should be embraced for that purpose within the capital ship tonnage of each nation. It was the position of the American Government that paper programs should not be counted, but only ships laid or upon which money had been spent. It was also the position of the American Government that ships in course of construction should be counted to the extent to which construction had already progressed at the time of the convening of the Conference. The latter position was strongly contested by Japan upon the ground that a ship was not a ship unless it was completed and ready to fight. It was pointed out, however, that in case of an emergency a warship which was 90 per cent completed was to that extent ready and that only the remaining 10 per cent of construction was necessary, and, similarly, in the case of a ship 70 per cent or 50 per cent or other per cent completed the work done was so much of naval strength in hand. It was also pointed out that it did not follow that because a ship had been completed that it was ready for action, it might be out of repair, its engines, boilers, apparatus, armament, might need replacement. It was idle to attempt to determine naval strength on supposed readiness for action at a given day. Objections could be made to any standard of measurement, but the most practicable standard was to take the existing capital ship tonnage, including the percentage of construction already effected in the case of ships which were being built. The American Government submitted to the British and Japanese naval experts its records with respect to the extent of the work which had been done on the ships under construction, and the negotiations resulted in an acceptance by both Great Britain and Japan of the ratio which the American Government had proposed"—*Report of the American Delegation on the Conference on the Limitation of Armament*, Senate Doc No 125, 67th Congress, 2nd Session.

² That is, 6 battle cruisers and 7 battleships in course of construction and 2 battleships already launched.

ing or under construction, *i.e.* including the "Hoods"), with an aggregate tonnage of 583,375 tons, and Japan 17, with an aggregate of 448,928 tons. Thus, under this plan, there would be immediately destroyed, of the navies of the three Powers, 66 capital fighting ships, built and building, with a total tonnage of 1,878,043.¹ When these reductions had been made, the United States Navy would consist of 18 capital ships with an aggregate tonnage of 500,650 tons, the British of 22 with an aggregate of 604,450 tons, and the Japanese of 10, with an aggregate of 299,700 tons. The ships belonging to the three Powers which were respectively to be retained and scrapped were considered individually in the American plan and, in setting them off against each other, their age as well as their tonnage was taken into account.

With regard to replacement, the proposals were as follows:

(1) That it be agreed that the first replacement tonnage should not be laid down until ten years from the date of the agreement,

(2) That replacement be limited by an agreed maximum of capital ship tonnage as follows:

For the United States and the British Empire, 500,000 tons each, and for Japan, 300,000 tons.

(3) That, subject to the ten-year limitation above fixed and the maximum standard, capital ships might be replaced when they were twenty years old by new capital ship construction,

(4) That no capital ship should be built in replacement with a tonnage displacement of more than 35,000 tons.

Examination of this plan was confined to the delegates of *Position of Japan* the three principal Powers, since it was recognised that in the case of France and Italy "existing strength" would not constitute a fair basis for any scheme of reduction. The Japanese delegation asked for a replacement ratio of 10-10-7 instead of 10-10-6, and also contested that definition of "existing strength" which included vessels in course of construction "to the extent to which construction had already progressed at the time of the convening of the Conference." To this the United States delegates replied that it would be "impossible to terminate competition in naval armament if the Powers were to condition their agreement upon the advantages they hoped to gain in the competition itself," and also that the American Government, while ready to sacrifice its battleships and battle

¹ Without including the four "Hoods." These had not yet been laid down, but money had been expended on them and the designs had been completed.

cruisers in course of construction, "was not willing to ignore the percentage of naval strength represented by over \$300,000,000 expended on the unfinished ships" The Japanese admitted the force of this contention, but put forward objections to the scrapping of their latest and most powerful ship, the *Mutsu*, the construction of which was not quite complete. They were accordingly allowed to retain this, and in return the United States was allowed to complete two vessels under construction, which were to have been scrapped, and instead to scrap two older ships which were to have been retained ✓

The deciding factor in the acquiescence of Japan in this arrangement and, in fact, in her readiness to accept the 5-5-3 ratio at all, was the undertaking of Great Britain and the United States, embodied in the provisions of the Five Power Treaty,¹ not to add to their existing fortifications and naval bases in those areas in the Pacific in which they might have constituted threats to Japan's existing sphere of influence. By accepting the 5-5-3 ratio for capital ships Japan was considered to have voluntarily renounced "those dreams of sole supremacy in the Far East and in the Pacific in which she had indulged on certain occasions since August 1914." The signature of the Treaties at Washington also marked the end of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which had been in force for twenty years, so that Japan contributed her full share of concessions to the common effort to arrive at agreement.

The acquiescence of the British Empire in this arrangement involved a serious sacrifice, since the four vessels of the "Hood" class had all been designed to exceed the 35,000 tons proposed as the maximum for capital ships. Besides abandoning these, Great Britain had to design and lay down two new vessels, not exceeding the maximum displacement, in order to make up the balance with the United States and Japan. This was eventually effected by the following arrangement. The United States retained 18 capital ships, with an aggregate tonnage of 500,650, the British Empire 22, with an aggregate of 580,450 tons, and Japan 10, with an aggregate of 301,320 tons. The maxima for replacement tonnage were raised to 525,000 tons each for Great Britain and the United States and

¹ See Article XIX of the Treaty, by which Great Britain, the United States, and Japan agreed to maintain the *status quo* with regard to naval bases, etc. A separate Treaty, signed by the United States, the British Empire, France and Japan on the 13th December, 1921, provided for the settlement of disputes regarding the Pacific by joint conference of the signatories.

315,000 for Japan, leaving the replacement ratio of 10-10-6 undisturbed. The names of the ships retained, together with details as to their tonnage, age, etc., are shown in the schedule attached to the text of the Washington Treaty.¹ From this it will be seen that the reason Great Britain was allowed to retain a larger number of capital ships than the United States was the fact that the British ships were on an average older and of smaller tonnage than the American. After the vessels marked for scrapping had been destroyed, the United States would have at least four battleships begun after Jutland, as against only one "post-Jutland" battle cruiser kept by the British Empire.

This scheme of reduction was estimated by the American delegation to have involved the scrapping of capital ships to the extent of approximately forty per cent of the existing strength and, as stated above, it was realised that no such reduction could be asked of France and Italy, whose "existing strength" was already at a comparatively low figure. It was eventually agreed that the replacement maximum for capital ships should be fixed at 175,000 tons for both countries, whose delegations in accepting it made the reservation that they would not consent to a proportionate limitation of auxiliary craft, as suggested in Point 4 of Mr Hughes' plan. So strong was the opposition of France, in particular, to the fixing of a moderate figure as a replacement maximum for destroyers and submarines that it was found necessary to leave auxiliary craft out of account altogether in drafting the Treaty.

This course having been decided upon, the Treaty was signed on the 6th February, 1922, by the representatives of the Five Powers.

As regards submarines, the British delegation had gone further than the American proposals, and advocated their abolition in a resolution submitted to the Conference on the 22nd December, 1921, but did not receive support for this, even from the United States. France refused to agree to the limitation of submarines except at a figure three times as large as the then existing French total tonnage,² while the United States delegation argued that they might legitimately be used against combatant ships and as scouts. After some

¹ See Appendix I.

² Admiral Le Bon claimed that 90,000 tons was the absolute minimum "for all the nations who may want to have a submarine force."

discussion the Naval Committee of the Conference adopted three resolutions proposed by the United States Delegation condemning the illegitimate use of submarines, and these were incorporated in a second Five Power Treaty, signed on the same day, the 6th February, 1922, with the express object of making provision for the protection of the lives of neutrals and non-combatants at sea in time of war, and to prevent the use in war of noxious gases and chemicals. By Article 4 of this the prohibition of the use of submarines as commerce destroyers was accepted by the signatories as thenceforth binding as between themselves, and the adhesion of all other nations was invited.

The net result of the Conference was, therefore, to arrest the competition in capital ship construction and limit their size, while something was done towards restriction of the methods of warfare by the signature of the second Treaty referred to above. As regards details, reference may be made to the text of the first Treaty printed as Appendix I to this work, but the following further particulars may be mentioned here. The calibre of all guns carried by capital ships was restricted to 16 inches, while those mounted on aircraft carriers were not to exceed 8 inches. Aircraft carriers themselves were restricted in tonnage to 27,000 tons and the following total tonnages for this class of vessel were allotted: to the United States and the British Empire, 135,000 tons each, to Japan, 81,000 tons, and to France and Italy, 60,000 tons.

Of more importance, as the event has shown, were the restrictions applied to cruisers. By Article 11, no vessel of war exceeding 10,000 tons standard displacement, other than a capital ship or aircraft carrier, was to be acquired by or constructed by any of the signatory Powers, and the maximum calibre of the guns carried by all such vessels was fixed at 8 inches.

Many naval writers on both sides of the Atlantic have attempted to put into a few words what the agreement arrived at has meant to the world. Thus, an American authority summed up the results in the words:

"I think it was the British who, so far as naval armament is concerned, gave up, in the interest of the purpose of this Conference, more that was concrete than any other nation. I think also it was the United States who gave up the greatest *potential* advantage. But what Great Britain gave up was actual."¹

¹ *The Great Adventure at Washington*, by Mark Sullivan, p. 118.

Elsewhere he said .

" It was this peaceful passing of naval dominance, or, to express it more accurately, this turning over of dominance to, so to speak, a board of trustees, making it no longer a prize of selfishness to be contended for by jealous nations, but rather a co-operative responsibility to be administered jointly, that made the Washington Conference ' unique in history ' " ¹

At the same time, the fact that the agreement reached was confined to capital ships should not be lost sight of. The essence of the understanding reached was the acceptance of parity with each other by Great Britain and the United States, this parity being interpreted as arithmetical equality in dealing with that part of the naval arm with which the Conference was able to deal in concrete terms by the conclusion of a formal agreement. When it came to applying "mathematical parity" to the other parts of the naval arm the problem proved to be very much more complicated, as the results of the Geneva Conference of 1927 showed.

The Treaty was ratified on the 17th August, 1923, and remains in force until the 31st December, 1936. By Article XXI, however, it was provided that, in view of possible technical and scientific developments, a conference should be called as soon as possible after the expiration of eight years from ratification to consider what changes, if any, in the Treaty might be necessary to meet such developments.

II THE ROME CONFERENCE OF FEBRUARY 1924

Less success attended the next attempt to carry forward a further step the work accomplished at Washington. There were two main directions in which this would have to be done if the aim of naval disarmament was to be achieved; the limitations imposed at Washington would have to be extended to other classes of vessels, and other Powers outside those represented at the Conference would have to come into the scheme. It was with a view to dealing with this second point that in September 1922 the Third Assembly of the League of Nations recommended the summoning of an international conference to consider the extension of the principles embodied in the Washington Five Power Treaty of the 6th February,

¹ It was thus described by Lord Balfour at one of the sessions *Op. cit* p 285

1922, to States not signatories of that Treaty, whether or not they were members of the League of Nations

The League Council, at its session of September 1923, requested the Permanent Advisory Commission on Armaments to examine the Washington Agreement from a technical point of view and to prepare a draft convention for the limitation of naval armaments. Meanwhile, in June 1922, the Naval Sub-Commission of the Permanent Advisory Commission had drawn up a draft convention based upon plans submitted by Admiral Segrave the Marquis de Magaz, and the Marquis di Saluzzo, but in accordance with the request of the Council it was decided to convene a meeting of the Naval Sub-Commission in Rome in February 1924 to carry out the recommendations of the Council and the Third Assembly.

The Conference was, therefore, technically a meeting of the Naval Sub-Commission of the Permanent Advisory Commission of the League of Nations, but invitations were also issued to all members of the League, who, though not members of the Naval Sub-Commission, possessed capital ships,¹ and to the Governments of other countries possessing capital ships, though they were not members of the League. Under this last heading came the United States, Turkey, and the U S S R, of which only the last named sent a representative. The United States was unwilling to participate, and Turkey refused on the ground that as the Lausanne Treaty had not yet been ratified she was still in a state of war. The States represented on the Naval Sub-Commission were identical with those represented on the Council of the League, that is, Belgium, Brazil, the British Empire, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden, and Uruguay, while the other countries participating, as owners of capital ships, were, Argentina, Chile, Denmark, Greece, Norway, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the U S S R.

The Conference met on 14th February, 1924, and broke up on 25th February, having accomplished nothing. The Russian delegate, Admiral Berens, declared at the outset that the U S S R was unable to accept the League as the organisation to superintend the execution of any international agreement, and in an interview with the press pointed out that, while for the present Russia was not in a position to re-establish her fleet on a modern standard, and was willing to agree to the

¹ That is, warships (not aircraft carriers) whose displacement exceeds 10,000 tons or which carry guns with a calibre exceeding 8 inches.

limitation of naval armaments in principle, it would have to be borne in mind that political treaties were the indispensable preliminaries to any decisions regarding disarmament which might be arrived at by the different States. He added that political agreements were only possible between States which were maintaining normal relations with each other, an advantage which was not enjoyed by Russia.

In the discussion at the Conference the Russian delegate was equally "difficult" as regards technical matters. To the proposal that Russia's tonnage for capital ships should be limited to 110,000 tons he replied demanding 400,000 tons, or considerably more than Japan, and refused to consider any modification of this except in return for political advantages which it was impossible for the other countries to concede.¹

There was no possibility of these demands being accepted by the other Powers, nor was any way round the difficulty seen to be open, and the Conference was forced to content itself with setting up a sub-committee to prepare a report for the League Council summarising the views of the different parties represented. This was adopted on 25th February and the Conference broke up.

The attitude of the delegate of the U.S.S.R. was the immediate occasion of the breakdown of the negotiations, but it is doubtful whether, apart from this, much progress could have been made in the objects for which the Conference was convened. The delegates were not plenipotentiaries of their Governments, but experts whose work was confined to studying the technical side of the problem preparatory to the holding of an international conference of a political character at some later date. The Washington Conference owed its success largely to the fact that political and technical discussions had been carried on side by side, and the experience of that and of later conferences has shown that if one is to come before the other it must be the political questions which are settled first. In Rome political questions were excluded altogether, so that the concrete conditions under which any scheme for naval limitation would be carried out could not be defined. And the political considerations which were bound to be before the minds of the delegates on this occasion were exceptionally

¹ Admiral Berens proposed that both the Black Sea and the Baltic should be closed to the warships of all Powers except the riverains, and the Straits of Korea demilitarised.

numerous and complicated, because the Powers concerned had interests in practically every part of the world, and in areas which had no connection with one another

"The main lesson of the meeting was that it is useless to ask staff and government experts to carry on preparations for disarmament until their political objective has been categorically established for them by their Cabinets or by the responsible heads of departments whom they serve "¹

III. THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

The Sixth Assembly of the League of Nations, which met in September 1925, took the next definite step in the process of giving effect to the desire of the principal naval Powers of the world to co-operate in the reduction of naval armaments. The Assembly of the previous year had prepared a draft treaty providing for the immediate calling of a general disarmament conference as soon as the Geneva Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes should have been adopted and ratified, but the failure of the Protocol to secure unanimous support prevented any progress being made along these lines. The Sixth Assembly, in dealing at length with the whole question of security and disarmament, was impressed with the fact that if a general disarmament conference was convened, its work would be greatly prolonged by the necessity of studying purely technical problems, and it was felt, therefore, that though the political situation of Europe was not yet ripe for the calling of such a conference, the opportunity might be taken to clear the ground for it by settling the more important technical details. Accordingly, the Assembly recommended the creation of a Preparatory Commission to deal with the technical questions which would be involved in a general disarmament conference, this Commission to be composed of experts whose minds would be free from political considerations.

The first step towards this was taken by the adoption by the Assembly, on the 25th September, 1925, of a resolution to the effect that the Assembly requested the Council to "make a preparatory study with a view to a conference for the reduction

¹ *Disarmament*, by Professor P. J. Noel Baker, Hogarth Press, 1926, p. 102. In the view of some experts the Conference was of importance because it set the example of obtaining from each Power a reasoned statement of its naval requirements.

and limitation of armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security . . . the said conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments realised ”

The result of this was that at its December meeting the *Appoint-
ment* League Council reorganised the existing Co-ordination Com-
mission¹ under the title of “Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference,” and summarised, for submission to the new body in the form of a series of questions, a vast amount of material which had been collected by the various League organs during the previous four or five years as to the multifarious elements of which a comprehensive scheme of armaments reduction should take account

The Preparatory Commission was composed of representatives of the ten States members of the Council, and representatives of certain States not otherwise represented on the Commission and specially interested in the question of disarmament, *i.e.* Bulgaria, Finland, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Poland and Rumania, while Germany, the United States and the U S S R were also invited to send representatives

The first meeting was fixed for 15th February, 1926, but *First session* was eventually postponed until 18th May *May 1926* Delegates from twenty countries attended, the British Empire being represented by Viscount Cecil and the United States by Mr Hugh Gibson². The first business was the appointment of two technical sub-commissions, A and B, to the first of which was submitted a detailed programme bearing on the military, naval and air aspects of the disarmament problem, and the results of the work of this sub-commission were placed before the Preparatory Commission at its March session in 1927. The debates held during its fifty-one plenary sessions served to show the extreme difficulty of reconciling conflicting views on such questions as whether total tonnage or tonnage by categories should be taken as the standard of comparison for naval armaments. Meanwhile, however, the opening meeting in May 1926 had been the occasion of a statement by Mr Gibson, the United States *M,* delegate, which gave a clear hint of the direction in which his *Gibson's* Government considered progress could be made in respect of

¹ This Commission had been appointed in 1924 in place of the Temporary Mixed Commission on Armaments which had existed since February 1921

² The Soviet Government declined to take part in spite of two attempts to persuade it to do so, owing to its objection to Geneva as the place of meeting

naval limitation It should first of all be stated that the mere fact that Mr Gibson was present at the meeting had considerable significance, and has, in fact, been described as marking the beginning of official co-operation between the American Government and the League of Nations in dealing with the question of disarmament

In his statement Mr Gibson repeated the words used by Mr Coolidge in his Message to Congress of 4th January, 1926, when he said, "The general policy of this Government in favour of disarmament and limitation of armament cannot be emphasised too frequently or too strongly. In accordance with that policy any measure having a reasonable tendency to bring about these results should receive our sympathy and support." After referring to the fortunate situation of the United States as regards land armaments Mr Gibson said

"With respect to naval armament it may be noted that while a substantial part of the programme presented to the Washington Conference by the American Government was realised, no agreement was reached as to the limitation of competitive building of naval craft other than capital ships and aircraft carriers. The American Government would welcome any steps which might tend to the further limitation of competitive naval construction"

During the discussions which filled the eight days of the Commission's session it became clear that the distinction between political and technical considerations was fictitious and impossible to sustain, for example, the list of questions dealt with included such matters as the definition of and distinction between offensive and defensive armaments, and it is not surprising, therefore, that no material progress was made towards clearing the ground for the Disarmament Conference, especially when it is remembered that unanimity is necessary for the adoption of all the Commission's decisions. A great deal was done, however, in showing up the real difficulties and, more especially, the fundamental differences between certain countries as to the principle by which naval tonnage should be limited. France, for example, wished for a total tonnage to be fixed without specifying vessel size, whilst Great Britain and the United States wanted the size of vessels fixed in each category. It was mainly the desire to find a solution for this difficulty that actuated President Coolidge in issuing, in February 1927, invitations

for the conference which was eventually held in the following summer. Before dealing with this, however, reference must be made to a speech by Mr Kellogg, the United States Secretary of State, on August 18th, 1926, which gave a clear indication of the intention of his Government to take up the unfinished task of the Washington Conference in the near future. While expressing goodwill towards the Preparatory Commission, Mr Kellogg referred to Mr Gibson's proposal of the 18th May, and made the following announcement on behalf of the United States :

"The work on limitation of naval craft has only been partly consummated. There has been a limitation of battleships and aircraft carriers alone. There still remains the task of limiting other units of naval strength as well, namely, cruisers, destroyers and submarines.

"I have stated before, and I reiterate, that the United States would be glad to co-operate with the other naval Powers in extending the principles of the Washington Treaty to other classes of naval vessels, and I earnestly hope that such a measure may soon be practicable."

The form which this co-operation was to take was made *President Coolidge's invitation for a naval conference* clear the following February when President Coolidge issued his invitations for an international conference for the limitation of naval armament. On the same day, February 10th, 1927, *conference* he sent a Message to Congress announcing the presentation of the invitations to the Governments of Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan, and explaining the considerations which had led him to take this action. The Washington Conference, he said, had succeeded in imposing a specific tonnage limitation upon capital ships and aircraft carriers, but agreement had not then been found possible with regard to other classes of ships. "Every nation had, therefore, been at complete liberty since 1922 to build any number of cruisers, destroyers and submarines, and "it was only to be expected that the spirit of competition, stifled as regards capital ships and aircraft carriers by the Washington Treaty, would sooner or later show itself with regard to the other vessels not limited under the treaty." Competitive building, in the President's opinion, had not actually begun, but far-reaching building programmes had been adopted by certain Powers, and there had appeared, both in the United States and in other countries, "a sentiment urging naval construction on the ground that such construction is taking place elsewhere. In such sentiments lie the germ

of renewed naval competition" The present moment seemed particularly opportune for negotiations for the conclusion of further agreements covering auxiliary vessels, since the "earnest desire of the nations of the world to relieve themselves in as great a measure as possible of the burden of armaments and to avoid the dangers of competition" had been shown by the establishment of the Preparatory Commission. The problem of naval limitation was not regional in character, as were those of the land and air, and could, the President believed, be definitely dealt with by further agreements among the five leading naval Powers, who had already treated it successfully in part. Finally, it would be "a contribution to the success of the preliminary work now going on at Geneva should the great naval Powers themselves agree upon a further definite limitation of naval armament"

In this way the President made it clear that he envisaged the work of the proposed conference as supplementary to and not in any way as duplicating that of the Preparatory Commission and the League organs generally. In the invitations issued to the four other naval Powers the latter were asked whether they were disposed to empower their representatives at the forthcoming meeting of the Preparatory Commission (that of March 1927) to initiate negotiations looking towards an agreement providing for limitation in the classes of vessels not covered by the Washington Treaty. The policy of the United States Government was outlined in the following passage

"Although hesitating at this time to put forward rigid proposals as regards the ratios of naval strength to be maintained by the different Powers, the American Government, for its part, is disposed to accept, in regard to those classes of vessels not covered by the Washington Treaty, an extension of the 5-5-3 ratio as regards the United States, Great Britain and Japan, and to leave to discussion at Geneva the ratios of France and Italy, taking into full account their special conditions and requirements in regard to the types of vessels in question. Ratios for capital ships and aircraft carriers were established by that Treaty, which would not be affected in any way by an agreement covering other classes of ships"¹

About a week before this invitation was received in London, Mr. Bridgeman, then First Lord of the Admiralty, submitted to the Prime Minister a plan for limitation of armaments on which the Admiralty had been working for some months, with the request that the Prime Minister would bring it before the

¹ *Records of Geneva Naval Conference, 1927*, U S Senate Doc No 55.

Cabinet, and, if it were accepted there, would call an international conference to consider it. This plan was later elaborated in detail by Mr Bridgeman at the Conference at Geneva on the 20th June, 1927.¹

Mr Coolidge's invitation was accepted by Great Britain *Replies to* and Japan, but refused by France and Italy. The French *President Coolidge's* Government considered the proposal for a conference to be *invitation* unacceptable because it threatened to compromise the chances of success of the movement for general disarmament, the French thesis being that the problem of naval disarmament could not be isolated from the general problem for separate treatment. It was felt that the authority of the League of Nations might be weakened if the Preparatory Commission were deprived of part of its programme, and one aspect of the general problem discussed by a conference limited to five Powers.

The Italian Government held the same views as to the interdependence of every type of armament, but in addition to this took occasion, in declining the invitation, to point out that Italy's "unfavourable geographical position" made it impossible for her, without serious risk, to accept a binding limitation of naval armaments. Her naval forces were already inadequate, and she was compelled to consider the problem in relation to other Mediterranean Powers whose geographical situation was more favourable and which were "elaborating naval programmes of great strength".

After consulting the Governments of the Dominions, the British Government accepted the invitation in a Note which contained the following statement regarding Great Britain's position.

"The views of His Majesty's Government upon the special geographical position of the British Empire, the length of inter-imperial communications, and the necessity for the protection of its food supplies are well known, and, together with the special conditions and requirements of the other countries invited to participate in the conversations, must be taken into account. His Majesty's Government are nevertheless prepared to consider to what extent the principles adopted at Washington can be carried further, either as regards the ratio in different classes of ships between the various Powers, or in other important ways."²

In spite, however, of the refusal of two of the interested Powers it was decided after further consultation to hold a

¹ See Appendix III.

² U.S. Senate Doc. No. 55

Three-Power Conference at Geneva in June 1927, and, at the request of the other Governments, Italy and France agreed to be represented by observers.

*Third session of
Preparatory
Commission,
March–
April, 1927*

Between the issue of the invitations by Mr Coolidge and the meeting of the Conference the Preparatory Commission held a further series of meetings, in March–April, 1927, which were noteworthy for the prolonged discussion of alternative draft conventions for the limitation of armaments submitted by the British and French delegates, ending in the issue of a Report ¹ in which the text of a convention was given so far as it had been established, that is, where unanimity had been obtained a single text was given, but where this was impossible the different proposals which had been submitted were set out side by side.

The British Government had come to the conclusion that the work done by the Preparatory Commission in 1926 had prepared the ground sufficiently to allow a definite step forward to be taken, and Lord Cecil, the principal British delegate, accordingly went to Geneva with a draft convention prepared for submission to the Commission. This he presented at the opening meeting on March 21st, 1927, and the French delegation, not to be outdone, submitted an alternative draft the next day.

*British and
French
draft dis-
armament
conventions*

These conventions dealt with the whole problem of disarmament, and a word must be said of that part of them which dealt with naval limitation—for both drafts provided for limitation and not reduction of armaments. The British draft proposed the division of ships into classes or categories, and the number and tonnage of ships in each class were to be limited, as well as the calibre of guns. The French draft proposed that limitation should apply only to total tonnage and not to tonnage by classes, and laid it down as a principle of the limitation of all armaments that in any attempt to effect this it was necessary to take into account the "war potentials" of a country, *i.e.* such factors as population, geographical position and natural resources.

The discussion which followed at once raised the crucial point, on which the sub-committee had already disagreed, as to whether tonnage was to be considered in classes or in the aggregate. In the British view, which was supported up to a certain point by the United States and Japan, it was essential to apply to all classes of war vessels the principles adopted at the Washington Conference. France, Italy, and the other

¹ Published as a British White Paper, *Cmd 2888* of 1927.

Powers wished to apply the limitation only to the total tonnage of the fleet, and thus secure liberty to concentrate, if desired, on one particular class, such as submarines. After much ^{French} discussion the French delegate, on April 6th, put forward a ^{proposal} compromise,¹ which aimed at the limitation of total tonnage, and also at the division of the total tonnage stated by each contracting party into total tonnage by groups. These groups would apply to four classes capital ships, aircraft carriers, surface vessels under 10,000 tons, and submarines. Each contracting party would undertake to fix a maximum tonnage for each of the categories during the period of validity of the convention. But, within the limits of the total tonnage stated, each party could alter its allocations to each class, within a certain margin, subject to informing the Secretariat of the League at least once a year before laying down the portion of the tonnage to be transferred. This proposal was intended to eliminate the danger of surprise, to which reference had been made by the British delegation, but it did not prove completely acceptable to the British Government. It was felt in London that it neither fulfilled Great Britain's minimum requirements for security nor obviated the danger of competition, and the session terminated without any way being found out of the difficulty. In the end the Commission closed its work on April 26th, 1927, with the adoption of the Report referred to above. In submitting his report on the work of the session to the British Government, Lord Cecil did not, however, take a pessimistic view. He said that the general principles of limitation of the land and air forces were not seriously in dispute and "even with regard to the sea, the differences can scarcely be considered irreconcilable. All the parties were agreed that fleets must be limited by their tonnage, and the only question really was as to how detailed that limitation should be. The French compromise proposal went a certain way in the direction which we desired, and the gap remaining between the respective views of the two countries does not seem to be of an unbridgeable extent."

This, therefore, was the position before the opening of the Three-Power Naval Conference in Geneva on the 20th June, 1927.

It would be appropriate here to say something of the naval construction programmes which had been adopted by the

¹ See Appendix II

Powers concerned since the signature of the Washington Treaty¹

Naval construction programmes adopted 1922-7

In Great Britain, when the Labour Government came into power in January 1924, arrangements had already been made for laying down eight cruisers of 10,000 tons, with 8-inch guns. This programme was reduced to five during the year, but was partly restored in 1925, when provision was made for the construction of a further nine 10,000-ton cruisers and seven of 8,400 tons, four to be built the first year and three in each following year². In 1924, five 10,000-ton cruisers were actually laid down, in 1926 two more of 10,000 tons, and one of 8,400 tons in 1927, while in addition two 10,000-ton vessels were laid down in 1925 for the Australian Government.

In the United States a Bill authorising the construction of eight 10,000-ton cruisers was passed by Congress on 18th December, 1924, appropriations for five of these were made in the Naval Appropriations Acts of 1925 and 1926, and two of them were actually laid down in 1926. By the end of that year, however, there were still three out of the eight for which no appropriation had been made.

Japan laid down three 5,159 ton cruisers and one of 2,890 in 1922, two of 7,100 tons in 1923, two of 7,100 and two of 10,000 tons in 1924, and two more of 10,000 tons in 1925. At the beginning of 1927 she had four 10,000 tonners projected, and the actual position on the 1st February, i.e. at the time the invitations to the Conference were issued, was as follows:

British Empire	Built	48	cruisers totalling	238,400	tons
	Building	9 ³	"	90,000	"
	Projected	9	"		
United States	Built	32	cruisers totalling	269,425	tons
	Building	5	"	50,000	"
	Projected	13	"		
Japan	Built	33	cruisers totalling	195,600	tons
	Building	6	"	54,200	"
	Projected	4	"		

In France a Bill providing for the construction of two 10,000-ton cruisers was passed on the 22nd April, 1924, and

¹ It will be noted that from the end of the War up to 1924 very little cruiser construction had been undertaken, except in the case of Japan. The significant fact in the new programmes was the simultaneous adoption by all Powers of the Washington maximum (10,000 tons and 8-in guns) as the normal type of cruiser.

² Of these seven only the *York* and *Exeter* have been constructed, being laid down in 1927 and 1928 respectively.

³ Four vessels of 10,000 tons and one of 8,400 tons (the *York*) were also laid down during the course of 1927.

in the two following years the Naval Construction Bills (of the 13th July, 1925, and the 24th August, 1926) provided for the laying down of one 10,000-ton cruiser each year. The whole programme to which the Government was to work was laid down in the projected *Statut Naval* of 1924, the main provisions of which are printed as an Appendix¹.

IV. THE ANGLO-FRENCH NAVAL COMPROMISE

Although actually concluded in the summer of 1928, the arrangement generally known as the Anglo-French Naval Compromise had its origins in the discussions which took place at the meetings of the Preparatory Commission in March and April 1927, and, more particularly, in the divergence of view between the British and French delegations. The history of the attempts to remove these difficulties is recorded in a British White Paper² published in October 1928.

This gives particulars of the proceedings in the Preparatory Commission in some detail, since the speeches made by the delegates of the principal countries concerned brought out clearly the radical difference of opinion between the British and French Governments as to whether the limitation of naval forces should be based on global tonnage or on a division of the vessels into categories. A summary of the contents may serve to make clear the place taken in the developments of the past three years by this attempt to reconcile the British and French views. In April 1927 the French delegation suggested a compromise, of which something has already been said,³ but owing to this being unacceptable to the British Government, no progress was made during that session of the Commission. It was not until the meeting a year later that the problem was definitely attacked again, and during the fifth session of the Commission a conversation took place between Sir Austen Chamberlain and M. Briand—on the 9th March, 1928—which was the first step in the negotiations which resulted in the compromise between the two countries.⁴ The gist of it was that the British Foreign Secretary put before M. Briand a draft of “modified proposals drawn up by the Admiralty,” modified, that is, as compared with the position taken up in the Preparatory Commission the previous spring. This draft suggested that limitation should be effected by classes as follows.

¹ See Appendix VII.

² *Cmd. 3211* of 1928.

³ See p. 21, above.

*Opening of
Franco-
British
negotiations*

- (1) Capital ships,
- (2) Aircraft carriers,
- (3) Cruisers between 10,000 and 7000 tons;
- (4) Surface vessels under 7000 tons,
- (5) Submarines, and
- (6) Small vessels exempt from limitation

States would be allowed to transfer tonnage from a higher into a lower category in all classes, excluding 1 and 2, subject to there being a limit to the proportion of total tonnage which might be utilised for submarines. States with a total tonnage, including class 6, not exceeding 80,000 tons would be subject to no classification.

Sir Austen Chamberlain said that public opinion realised that concessions were necessary from all parties for a general settlement to be reached, and if he could point to a concession by the French in naval matters it would probably acquiesce in his yielding a point on the military side. In reply, M. Briand asked for a personal copy of the proposals, and said he would place them before the French naval authorities.

[The next step taken was the statement by Count Clauzel, on the 22nd March, to the effect that conversations were proceeding on certain "delicate questions" which had hitherto caused difficulties, and he proposed that the reading of the draft convention on disarmament should be postponed until they had been completed, since the one condition of success was that these conversations should be carried on, not only between technical experts, but between Governments as well.

In a speech made the following day, Mr. Gibson, the principal American delegate, said that he felt nothing further could be accomplished in public meetings until after an effort had been made by direct negotiation between the various Governments to find a way, through mutual concession, to eliminate existing divergences. On the same day Lord Cushendun made a statement in confirmation of the information given by Count Clauzel, and the conversations to which the French statesman had referred continued without further public utterance until towards the end of June. The British Foreign Secretary then addressed a letter to the British Ambassador in Paris, from which it appeared that the French Admiral Violette had earlier in the month made a suggestion to Admiral Kelly, one of the

British advisers at Geneva, proposing that the only surface vessels subject to limitation should be those mounting a gun of larger calibre than 6-inch. This would have produced a classification for the Preparatory Commission as follows

- (a) Capital ships;
- (b) Aircraft carriers;
- (c) Surface vessels of 10,000 tons and under, mounting a gun above 6 inches,
- (d) Submarines

Sir Austen Chamberlain said that the British Government was ready to accept this suggestion, and would instruct its representatives to support it, if put forward by the French. He concluded the letter by saying, "You should add that the adoption of this suggestion, which His Majesty's Government recognise would be a concession to their views on naval classification, would enable them to meet the French Government by withdrawing their opposition to the French standpoint in regard to army-trained reserves" ¹

Army-trained reserves

This communication was passed on to the French Foreign Minister on the 28th June, and in reply M. Briand addressed a long communication to the British Embassy under date the 20th July, 1928 ² The chief points in this were the following :

The French Government, while prepared to accept in principle the proposals put forward in the British Note, considered that the method of their application should be defined. With this end in view Admiral Violette had asked Admiral Kelly whether the British Government proposed that submarines should be limited by fixing the same maximum tonnage for all the great naval Powers, "the advantage of such a system being to avoid the possibility of engaging in delicate discussions concerning the relative needs and importance of different navies" He had also asked whether the same method could be applied to the cruisers which fell within the scope of the British Note, it being understood, of course, that the Conference on Disarmament would have eventually to record, below the theoretical maximum tonnage allowed, the actual figures which in practice the High Contracting Parties would undertake not

¹ British White Paper, *Cmd 3211* of 1928, pp 20-21

² *Op. cit.*, pp 22-24

Proposal to divide submarines into two classes

to exceed for the duration of the convention. Finally, Admiral Violette had also asked whether submarines could not be divided into two classes, coastal submarines being exempt from all limitation "in view of their strictly defensive character"

The French Government expressed itself as willing to accept the British proposals as a whole if these suggestions were incorporated in them, and added, "This arrangement would have the effect of avoiding at Geneva awkward discussions more likely to increase the existing mistrust between the Powers than to create the atmosphere of mutual confidence essential to a general limitation of armaments"

The Note concluded by reminding the British Government that the agreement so earnestly desired could only bear fruit if the United States Government, in particular, agreed to accept it, but "the Government of the Republic are convinced that the concerted action of France and Great Britain will enable the two Governments to obtain the approval of the naval Powers concerned" Should this hope prove illusory, however, "the two Governments would, none the less, be under the urgent obligation (*l'impérieux devoir*) to concert either to ensure success by other means or to adopt a common policy so as to deal with the difficulties which would inevitably arise from a check to the work of the Preparatory Commission"

The British Government's reply of the 28th July contained only one important point. This was the endorsement of the French claim that France should be allotted the same maximum tonnage as Great Britain and America for the classes of vessels still to be limited, *i.e.* (c) and (d) in the classification mentioned in the British Government's first Note of the 28th June. The actual words were as follows—

"His Majesty's Government, in their anxious desire to reach such an agreement with France and other Powers as will lead to the successful conclusion of the labours of the Preparatory Commission, and believing that the proposals now made by the French Government are of a character to achieve this result, are prepared to accept the supplementary proposals made in the French Note, namely, that an equal maximum tonnage for submarines and cruisers should be fixed for the great naval Powers, and that submarines should be divided into two classes, the smaller class being exempt from all limitation"¹

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 26

THE ANGLO-FRENCH NAVAL COMPROMISE 27

Two days later telegrams were despatched from the Foreign Office to the British diplomatic representatives in Washington, Tokyo and Rome, giving them the details of the compromise arrived at, but making no mention of the question of the trained reserves. The naval compromise itself was described as a "substantial modification of the positions" which the British and French Governments had respectively held at the meeting of the Preparatory Commission in March 1927.

Other naval Powers informed, June 30, 1928.

On the same day, the 30th July, 1928, Sir Austen Chamberlain made a statement in the House of Commons which was the means of acquainting the world, for the first time, with information as to what had been taking place. In reply to a question as to what progress had been made in the Preparatory Commission, he said that no definite date had yet been fixed for its next meeting, but that,

"as has been publicly announced,¹ conversations have been proceeding between ourselves and the French with the hope of reducing the difference between us, indeed, in the hope of finding some compromise upon which we could both agree, and which we might then submit to other Powers, and perhaps, by our proposals, facilitate progress in the Committee. These conversations have been successful between the French and ourselves, and I am about to communicate to the other principal naval Powers the compromise at which we have arrived, with the hope that it may be acceptable to them also, and that thus a great obstacle to progress will have been removed and a step made in advance. Until these proposals have been communicated to the other Governments I do not like to say more about them."²

In reply to a question whether these were purely naval proposals, the Foreign Secretary said

"Yes. The proposals I want to communicate are dealing with the disagreements that arise in regard to the naval issue, in which, of course, we take a particular interest. . . Our Navy has always been the principal defence of our country, and, therefore, naval questions are the ones that interest us most, and it is upon them that we have been seeking to reconcile our differences, and this is the method of making progress."

¹ This statement attracted a good deal of attention abroad, and in Berlin, in particular, was the cause of some concern owing to a report becoming current that the British Government had abandoned its opposition to the French view that

Attitude of German Government

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¹ The Foreign Secretary referred presumably to Count Clauzel's statement of the 22nd March, 1928, at Geneva.

² British White Paper, *Cmd 3211* of 1928, p 28

trained reserves should be omitted from calculations of military effectives. The Ambassador in Berlin wired for authority to assure the German Government that there was "nothing in the compromise inconsistent with the Locarno Treaties," and received this by a telegram of the 5th August, 1928, but in this communication the Foreign Secretary also said that

"The text of the compromise itself refers exclusively to naval limitation, but there is an understanding with the French Government, made before the text of the compromise was actually drawn up, that if they could meet His Majesty's Government on the question of naval limitation the latter would be prepared to withdraw their opposition to the views of the French and most other Governments on the question of trained reserves, which caused the deadlock in the Preparatory Commission in March 1927."¹

*Further
communica-
tions to
Washington*

Steps were taken at the same time to keep the United States Government informed of the position, and copies of the above telegrams were sent to Washington. On the 10th August a lengthy statement was also telegraphed explaining the reasons that had led the British Government to take the course it had done. In this the compromise was described as representing a successful attempt to arrive at an accord between the two Governments, but the British Government realised that it was no more than the first step, which, it was hoped, might lead to general agreement among the Powers represented on the Preparatory Commission. The telegram continued

"In the divergence of views which appeared at the outset between the British and French Governments, the view of the United States was in principle in agreement with that of Great Britain, and as the compromise now reached with the French goes a considerable way towards meeting the views of the United States and ourselves we entertain the hope that it will have the approval and support of the American Government. But we desire to emphasise the fact that this Anglo-French agreement is not a treaty or even a final binding agreement in regard to naval disarmament."²

With regard to the reported concession to the French attitude on the subject of trained reserves the telegram said

"His Majesty's Government have reluctantly reached the conclusion that it will be impossible to move the French and the majority of other European Governments from the attitude which

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 29

² *Op. cit.* p. 30

they have consistently adopted on this question and that, in present conditions, no further progress in regard to land disarmament will be possible as long as this stumbling-block remains in the way. They do not, therefore, propose to offer any further resistance to the French contention at the present time. It is not believed that any American interest can be prejudiced by the withdrawal of His Majesty's Government's opposition on the military reservist question. An agreement on land disarmament, even if it is in our view not entirely satisfactory in the matter of military reservists, would represent an important stage in the general progress of disarmament and would be far better than no agreement at all. Moreover, an acceptance of the French Government's thesis on the reservists question will have the important effect of winning the French Government over to the British and American side in the matter of the classification to be adopted as a basis for naval limitation."¹

The above statements have been quoted at some length because, although the compromise is now a matter of past history, the questions raised by its terms are still live issues to-day, and will confront the delegates at the forthcoming Five-Power Conference in London. Also, the British Government's admission that the undertaking to support the French view was given prior to the drawing up of the text of the compromise is considered in Paris to give grounds for the French contention that the undertaking must stand, in spite of the fate that has overtaken the proposed agreement on naval limitation.

Nothing further was heard of the matter until the 30th August, when Lord Cushendun made a statement at Geneva in which he explained that the compromise was "not an agreement at all in the ordinary sense of the word, as applied to international negotiations resulting in an accord. It is not a treaty and it is not final." He went on to explain the circumstances in which the negotiations had been begun, emphasising the necessity for agreement between Great Britain and France as the first step towards reaching a settlement of the difficulties which had been encountered at Geneva in 1927 when the task of drafting a disarmament convention was attempted. The "so-called agreement" he described as nothing more or less than a solution of the particular difficulty caused by the divergency between the British and French draft texts, and he assured his audience that it contained no secret clauses, or arrangements for the pooling of the naval forces of the two countries.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 31

11

Lord
Cushendun's
statement
at League
Council,
Aug. 30,
1928

*Texts of
French and
British Notes
sent to other
naval Powers
Sept. 26,
1928*

*U.S. reply,
Sept. 28,
1928*

*New U.S.
proposals*

The following month, on the 26th September, communications were made to the United States, Italian and Japanese Governments giving them the texts of the Notes exchanged with the French Government in June and July,¹ of which the main points have been summarised above. But five days previous to this the Hearst newspapers in New York published what were alleged to be the full terms of the agreement, of the details of which no particulars had hitherto been published either in England or France, and disapproval of its character and surprise that it should have been thought acceptable to the United States was general throughout the country. As was pointed out in a Note² from the Secretary of State addressed to both the British and French Governments on the 28th September, the United States could not "consent to proposals which would leave the door wide open to unlimited building of certain types of ships of a highly efficient combatant value and impose restrictions only on types peculiarly suitable to American needs." The Washington Treaty had already regulated the first two classes of vessels mentioned in the compromise, i.e. capital ships and aircraft carriers, and the Preparatory Commission would, therefore, only have to consider cruisers of 10,000 tons and under, with guns of 6 to 8 inches calibre, and ocean-going submarines of over 600 tons. The United States Government had always taken the line that limitation, to be effective, should apply to all classes of combatant vessels, but the compromise provided for the limitation only of the 10,000-ton 8-inch-gun type of cruiser, the 6-inch-gun cruiser was apparently not to be limited, but the United States could not accept these vessels as a separate class, since they were capable of being made into highly efficient offensive weapons. As 6-inch guns could be mounted on merchant ships, the proposal would place the United States at a "decided disadvantage" and was "contrary to the principle of limitation as applied to important combatant types of vessels." As regards submarines, the United States would gladly see them abolished, but if this were not done, they should be limited to a reasonable tonnage or number.

The Note concluded by recapitulating the proposals put forward by Mr Gibson at the opening of the Three-Power Con-

¹ That is, the British Notes of the 28th June and the 28th July and the French Note of the 20th July.

² British White Paper, *Cmd 3211* of 1928, p. 34.

ference at Geneva in June 1927,¹ and then made a suggestion which kept the door open for further negotiation. The Government, it stated, remained willing to use its best efforts to obtain a basis of further limitation satisfactory to all the naval Powers, and was ready to take into consideration the special needs of France, Italy and any other naval Power for the particular class of vessels deemed by them most suitable for their defence. For instance, the Powers, it was suggested, might be permitted to vary the percentage of tonnage in classes within the total tonnage, a certain percentage to be agreed upon, so that, "if there was an increase in one class of vessels it should be deducted from the tonnage to be used in other classes. A proposal along these lines made by Great Britain . . . would be sympathetically considered by the United States".

This suggestion was considered to offer an opening for the resumption of the negotiations from the point at which they left off on the failure of the attempts to reconcile the British and French points of view at Geneva in April 1927.

The replies of the Japanese and Italian Governments reached London very soon afterwards. The former was favourable, but the Italian view was that limitation by global tonnage was the only fair method of procedure, and the concession made in this respect by France accordingly received no support. The Italian Government also made it clear that it could not concur in a separate discussion of the naval problem, but only in one which considered limitation, "in the broadest and most logical manner from its three aspects, military, naval, aerial".

If the compromise found no favour in the United States, it was criticised equally severely in Great Britain itself. In the House of Commons on the 6th November Mr Ramsay MacDonald described it as entirely composed of points which had already been rejected by the other interested Powers, whether in the Preparatory Commission or in the Three-Power Naval Conference, and said that the Government had endeavoured to make palatable a dish which was *prima facie* repulsive by concealing its concession to the French theory regarding military reserves, at any rate, the fact had only been revealed when German suspicion of it had become vocal.

On the same day, in a statement made in the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury said that the compromise was not, and never had been, a pact, but only a suggestion as to a possible approach

¹ See p. 32, below.

towards disarmament jointly submitted to other Powers. Owing to their reception of it, it was undoubtedly at an end.

Criticism in this country was, in general, directed most strongly against the Government's concession to the French contention regarding trained reserves, and on more than one occasion attempts were made by the Government to remove misconceptions on this score. On the 7th November, speaking in the House of Lords, Lord Cushendun said that the Government was "under no obligation" with France with regard to this matter, and that "we could, if we like, alter our own view with regard to military reserves," and a day or two later Mr. Baldwin explained in the House of Commons why France would never see eye to eye with Great Britain and the United States on the subject of conscription, this, he said, the French people regarded as a part of democracy, and it was not necessarily a symptom of militarism.

V THE THREE POWER CONFERENCE AT GENEVA, JUNE-AUGUST, 1927

*First
plenary
session
U.S. pro-
posals*

The Three Power Conference convened on the initiative of Mr. Coolidge¹ opened at Geneva on the 20th June, and Mr. Hugh Gibson, who headed the American delegation, was elected President. The work began by each party tabling its proposals, the United States coming first. Mr. Gibson outlined his Government's scheme in great detail, the main principle being that the ratios of the Washington Treaty should be extended to apply to auxiliary vessels, which should be divided into four categories. Of these, three, i.e. cruisers, destroyers and submarines, should be subject to limitation, while the fourth would not be limited, but would consist only of vessels of negligible combatant value, "the definition of vessels falling in this class to be subject to technical agreement."

The United States, said Mr. Gibson, was prepared to accept a general programme providing for as low a total tonnage in each class of auxiliary vessels on the basis of the Washington Treaty ratio as would be acceptable to the other Powers. The delegation had come to the Conference with an estimate of what they considered equitable tonnage allocation in the various classes of vessels, but with no rigid quantitative proposals. These tonnage allocations were as follows:

¹ See p. 17 *et seq.*, above.

Cruiser class—Total tonnage limitation For the British Empire and the United States, 250,000 to 300,000 tons each, and for Japan 150,000 to 180,000 tons

Destroyer class—For the British Empire and the United States, 200,000 to 250,000 tons each, and for Japan 120,000 to 150,000 tons

Submarine class—For the British Empire and the United States, 60,000 to 90,000 tons each, and for Japan 36,000 to 54,000 tons

In conclusion, Mr Gibson stated that if any Power felt justified in proposing still lower tonnage levels his Government would welcome this, and was "not unfavourable" to the consideration of a general agreement for the abolition of submarines, should this be possible

The British proposals were next explained by Mr Bridge-*British proposals* man,¹ who began by drawing attention to the difference between the way in which the problem necessarily presented itself to the British Government and people from that in which it was viewed by the other naval Powers. In a review of the "considerations which governed the position of Great Britain" he said

"First and foremost there is the insular position of the Mother Country and the fact that she is almost entirely dependent not only for raw material, but also for her food supplies and her very existence upon free passage upon the seas. It is no exaggeration to say that if the seas were closed to ships trading with our country, we should be faced with starvation within a few weeks

The other important factors in our case are the immense lengths of the routes over which our trade is carried, and the very large coast-lines which bound the various parts of the Empire, and the necessity for providing reasonable protection for these extensive shores and long lines of communication . . ."

Mr Bridgeman then put forward a list of proposals which were noteworthy, amongst other things, for the fact that they departed, in the American view, from what might be called the terms of reference of the Conference, for they included proposals for the reduction in size and the extension of the life of capital ships, as the following outline of their main heads will show

1 The extension of the accepted life of existing capital vessels from twenty to twenty-six years, involving a waiver by the three

¹ See Appendix III. The texts of Mr Bridgeman's speeches at this and the following plenary sessions of the Conference are printed in the British White Paper, *Cmd 2964* of 1927

Powers of their full rights under the replacement tables adopted at Washington. The life of 8-inch gun cruisers also to be fixed at twenty-four years.

2 The reduction of the size of future capital ships to a maximum of something under 30,000 tons.

3 Reduction of the maximum calibre of guns in battleships to 13 5 inches.

4 Acceptance of the existing ratio of 5-5-3 for cruisers of 10,000 tons, carrying 8-inch guns.

5 A limitation of 7500 tons and 6-inch guns to be placed on all future cruisers after the number of 10,000-ton vessels has been decided upon.

Proposals were also made for reductions in the maximum tonnage of aircraft carriers, together with a reduction of the calibre of their guns, and limitation of the tonnage of destroyer leaders, while as to submarines it was suggested that the tonnage of the larger type should be limited to 1600 tons, and of the smaller to 600 tons, with a maximum calibre of 5 inches for the guns of both types. It was explained, however, that this proposal was made owing to recognition of the fact that Powers possessing fewer of the larger vessels of war regarded the possession of submarines as a valuable weapon of defence, but that the British Government itself was still prepared, as at Washington, to agree to the discontinuation of their use altogether.

The Japanese scheme was simpler, though vague in character, and really amounted to the maintenance of the *status quo*. Briefly, it provided that in future no building programme should be adopted and no new ships acquired for the purpose of increasing naval strength, and that the naval strength allowed to each Power should be determined for auxiliary vessels (including submarines) on the basis of the tonnage of the existing effective ships and of the ships under construction.

Japanese proposals

Comparison of proposals

From a comparison of these proposals it will be noticed that whereas the American delegation came to Geneva prepared to discuss a simple extension to auxiliary vessels of the Washington Treaty principles as regards capital ships, the British Government presented the Conference with a scheme which introduced an entirely new element, to the implications of which the other parties to the discussion had not hitherto given consideration. This was unfortunate, because it, as it were, put the negotiations out of their stride at the very first

step, necessitating a readjustment of their ideas on the part of the delegates of the other two Powers, but this alone might not have caused more than a temporary difficulty had it not been that as the British thesis was developed it became clear that it was out of consonance with that of the United States in one important respect, in that it, in effect, excluded from the proposed extension of the Washington ratio to auxiliary vessels all cruisers except those of 10,000 tons, carrying 8-inch guns. As the negotiations proceeded this point was found to constitute an increasingly serious obstacle to Anglo-American agreement, for the reason that the United States Government was not disposed to accept limitation in the particular type of cruiser to which it attached the greatest value while leaving to Great Britain freedom to build up to a large total tonnage in a different type of cruiser, to which the British Government attached particular value but the United States did not.

The British proposals made no mention of total tonnage of auxiliary vessels, but aimed at achieving limitation by reducing the size and lengthening the life of all naval vessels, capital ships as well as cruisers, destroyers and submarines, though by the terms of the Washington Treaty the maximum displacement and life of the former was not due for reconsideration until 1931.¹

After the three delegations had submitted their proposals *Proposals handed to Technical Committee* they were handed to a Technical Committee for examination, *Technical Committee* and the Conference did not meet again in plenary session for *Committee* over three weeks. During the informal meetings held between the principal delegates, the point that aroused most interest was the British desire to include capital ships in the discussions. This appears to have taken the other delegations genuinely by surprise, and the British contention that it did not involve any actual modification of the Washington Treaty,² since the suggestion was merely that the three Powers should agree to renounce their rights under it on certain points, failed to convince the Americans of the wisdom of adopting the proposal.

After reference to their respective Governments, however, the American and Japanese delegates consented to discuss capital ships, but only, in the case of the Americans, after the

¹ By Article XXI of the Treaty a second Conference was to be held in eight years to consider what changes, if any, in the Treaty might be necessary to meet technical and scientific developments.

² This could not, of course, have been effected in the absence of the other signatories, France and Italy.

objects for which the Conference had been convened had been attained, and at the same time the State Department at Washington expressed the view publicly that the extension of the life and reduction of the tonnage of battleships would prolong the existing disparity in Great Britain's favour¹ This led Mr Bridgeman and Lord Cecil to make a personal call on Mr Gibson in order to assure him that there was no question in the minds of any of the members of the British Government that the United States was not entitled to absolute parity with Great Britain in all classes of vessels A statement on the same lines was issued to the American press representatives at Geneva, who had been charging the British Government with systematically attempting to secure a superiority of naval strength in all classes, and on the following day Mr Kellogg, the United States Secretary of State, expressed his satisfaction that the "misapprehension had been cleared away"

British cruiser requirements Consideration of the question of capital ships was accordingly postponed, and the discussions thenceforth centred on that of cruisers Here the delegates at once came face to face with a delicate problem presented by the British attitude, of which Mr. Bridgeman had given an indication in his speech on the opening day when he said that the British delegation could only discuss cruisers on the basis of the essential requirements of the British Empire These requirements were primarily concerned with the protection of commerce, and could best be met by the possession of a large number of vessels of medium size, of a maximum displacement of 7,500 tons armed with nothing larger than 6-inch guns This type of cruiser the British Government regarded as a defensive rather than an offensive weapon, and wished a distinction to be drawn between it and the larger vessels of 10,000 tons carrying 8-inch guns, The British proposals accordingly included provision for the division of cruisers into two classes, large and small, to the first only of which the Washington ratio of 5-5-3 would be applied. As regards the second, in considering the question of limitation the British Government was unable to lose sight of the "absolute" needs of the Empire calling for the patrolling of lines of trade routes and communications 80,000 miles in length, and this led it to take the view that, whatever the needs of other countries and whatever

¹ If this view was correct, it would seem to show that the experts at Washington had made an error in their calculations

their views as to relative strengths, in so far as the commerce protecting cruiser was concerned, the British Empire alone must be the judge of its own requirements. Having agreed to the principle of parity with the United States, it was, of course, quite ready to see that country build up to an equal tonnage in that class of vessel, but as the estimate of the minimum British requirements exceeded by a large figure the tonnage proposed by the United States as a maximum, this did not do much to lessen the difficulty. It was increased by the fact that not *U.S.* and only did America not want a large number of small cruisers, ^{Japanese attitudes} but she *did* desire to possess large ones, with a radius of action which would do something to make up for the absence of naval bases belonging to her abroad. She was supported by Japan in her objection to the British suggestion as to the distinction to be made between the two classes of cruisers, the smaller vessels were useful only to a Power like the British Empire, which possessed numerous naval bases, and if they were armed with only 6-inch guns they would be of even less value to any other Power, since Great Britain would be able, in case of need, to convert large numbers of merchant ships into fighting vessels¹ and so upset any treaty arrangements as to ratios. Accordingly, when the British plan for the division of cruisers into two categories was put forward the American and Japanese delegates asked for time to consider it. When the discussion of it was renewed some days later in the Technical Committee the American delegate submitted a statement which he declared should be "construed as our maximum effort to meet the British view-point," and he went on to say that he was unable to discuss cruiser tonnages in excess of 400,000 tons for the period ending December 31st, 1936². During that period the United States would require full liberty of action to build 10,000-ton cruisers up to a total of 250,000 tons, recognising at the same time the full right of other Powers to build cruisers of similar characteristics up to similar tonnages in accordance with the principles of the Washington Treaty. They were, however, willing, for the period mentioned, "to limit our further construction within a total tonnage limitation of 400,000 tons to vessels of a smaller tonnage, to be agreed upon,"

¹ By Article XIV of the Washington Treaty the arming of merchantmen with 6 inch guns was permitted. British naval experts deny this argument on the ground that a merchant vessel armed with 6-inch guns would be no match for a cruiser with the same armament. See Appendix I.

² That is, when the Washington Treaty expired.

but did not see any reason for limiting the calibre of guns in the smaller class of cruisers to anything different from that in the larger class. Finally, they still "ardently" desired that the total tonnage limitation of cruisers to be agreed upon should be very much lower than 400,000 tons, while "any limitation on the basis of a cruiser tonnage in excess of 400,000 tons we regard as so ineffective a limitation as not to justify the conclusion of a treaty at this time."

As the discussions in the Technical Committee had by now revealed that the British Government's estimate of the "absolute" needs of the British Empire involved the possession of 70 cruisers, of which 15 would be of large tonnage, it was obvious that agreement between Great Britain and the United States on the basis of the figure of 400,000 tons was not possible, since even if the 55 smaller British cruisers had been of only 6,000 tons displacement the total tonnage would have worked out at 480,000 tons¹. An attempt was made by Mr. Bridgeman to effect a compromise by suggesting that the total tonnage agreement for cruisers might be made to apply only to vessels under twenty years of age, and that the British Empire might be allowed to retain, in addition, a certain number of vessels beyond the replacement age; but this was not considered to have got over the difficulty, and the Technical Committee decided that the only course to take was to draw up a report on the results which had so far been achieved. In this it was stated that while provisional agreement had been reached regarding destroyers and submarines, this had not been found possible in the case of cruisers, and it was decided to hold a plenary session of the Conference on July 11th "to give the British delegation an opportunity of stating their case, in order that it might not be misrepresented."²

*Report of
Technical
Committee*

*Second
plenary
session of
Conference
Mr Bridge-
man's speech*

The second plenary session actually opened on the 14th July, when Mr Bridgeman prefaced a restatement of the British proposals by referring to the "gross misrepresentations of the British case in certain quarters" which were vitiating the atmosphere in which the discussions were being carried on.³ He then said that numbers of cruisers were more

¹ The figure generally mentioned for the tonnage of the smaller type was actually 7,500 tons.

² For some days a campaign had been conducted in the American press accusing Great Britain of aiming at reasserting her supremacy at sea.

³ The official inquiry now in progress in America regarding the activities of Mr Shearer forms an interesting commentary on this.

important to Great Britain than size, and she was prepared not to lay down any more 8-inch-gun cruisers until the United States and Japan had built up to the Washington ratio. With regard to smaller cruisers, the American right to parity was not contested, but the British delegation did desire to limit the size and the armament of this class of vessel so that they might be defensive and not offensive weapons. There was no intrinsic objection to accepting a limit of total tonnage, provided other countries made it clear what proportion they wanted of large cruisers armed with 8-inch guns, the offensive strength of which was at least two and a half times as great as that of 6-inch-gun vessels. To agree in advance to a total tonnage of 400,000 for cruisers would put the British Empire in the position of accepting "not parity, but definite inferiority in offensive power," unless they were prepared to abandon the number of cruisers regarded as essential for the protection of Imperial communications.¹

This statement was supplemented by detailed particulars of the duties for which the British cruisers were required, furnished by Lord Jellicoe with the object of making it clear why the British Government was compelled to make its calculations on the assumption that its needs in cruiser strength were "absolute," and not merely relative to those of other Powers. Lord Jellicoe explained how the figure of 70 vessels as a minimum had been arrived at,² but owing to the unwillingness of the American delegation to admit the principle of "absolute" needs as the basis for fixing the ratios, his explanation appears to have had no effect. The light in which the American delegates envisaged the problem was, in fact, in direct opposition to that of the British spokesmen, as was proved when Mr. Gibson declared that he entertained "very *Mr Gibson's* serious misgivings in regard to the effort to prepare in time of *speech* peace for all possible contingencies of this character in time of war . . . If in time of peace we are building up forces to perform this duty (of hunting down commerce raiders) it effectively closes the door to any real limitation of cruiser strength." He repeated that the American proposals were based on the belief that naval needs were relative, not absolute,

¹ The text of Mr Bridgeman's speech is printed in the British White Paper, *Cmd 2984* of 1927.

² It is interesting to note that Lord Jellicoe stated that, although Great Britain had had 114 cruisers in 1914, the amount of shipping sunk by German raiders had shown this number to be inadequate.

and that the fairest method of limitation was that of total tonnage by classes¹ On the subject of 10,000-ton cruisers, Mr Gibson pointed out that if agreement could be reached on the tonnage level advocated by his Government it would obviously not be possible for the United States to add to their existing fleet the 25 cruisers of the largest size which they had been credited with demanding, and the American delegation was quite ready to discuss the number of large cruisers once a tonnage limitation had been agreed upon ✓

✓ The position, then, was that the British delegation still refused to consider the problem in terms of total tonnage unless they were sure of their 70 cruisers, while the Americans were determined not to discuss numbers until agreement had been reached on total tonnage. Mr. Gibson suggested that, as the

*British and
Japanese
compromise*

Japanese delegates were in agreement with him on the main issues, Great Britain and Japan should attempt to come to an agreement between themselves, when, he was sure, America would be able to endorse it, and a compromise scheme was, in fact, drawn up after a series of conversations between the British and Japanese delegates. This did not secure American support, however, owing partly to the inclusion of a provision for the retention of certain vessels beyond the replacement age,² and in a statement by Mr Gibson, the day after the Anglo-Japanese plan had been first considered, the United States delegate "made it quite clear that in his opinion a treaty which deprived the United States of its liberty of action with respect to arming the proposed second class of cruisers as they saw fit would be unacceptable," and that "an attempt to deny the United States their liberty of action would be the best method of arousing popular resentment and driving that country into a big building programme."

*British dele-
gates re-
called to
London*

Thus matters stood when the principal British delegates were recalled to London for consultation with the Government. The reasons which led to this step became known subsequently, when Lord Cecil had resigned office owing to his inability to identify himself with the policy of the Cabinet. From the statement he made in the House of Lords on the 16th November, 1927, the fact was made public that Mr. Bridgeman's personal assurance to Mr. Gibson that Great

¹ That is, counting all cruisers as one class, in contra-distinction to the British subdivision of them into two, large and small, or offensive and defensive

² In any case the scheme did not go far towards meeting the American views as to total tonnage, etc

Britain was ready to agree to parity in all classes of vessels had "caused great anxiety" to some of the members of the Cabinet, which thenceforward became divided in opinion as to the policy to be pursued in respect of auxiliary vessels. A section of the Cabinet was prepared to see the Conference break down rather than subscribe to a treaty embodying the principle of parity in all classes and, in addition to this, the majority of the Ministers were for insisting on a 6-inch gun as the maximum calibre armament for the smaller cruisers. When, however, Lord Cecil requested that someone else should be sent to Geneva in his place he was asked to reconsider his decision, and in consenting to do so and return to Geneva he said that if the negotiations failed on the point about the guns, as he felt sure they would, he would have to reserve his full liberty to resign. And as a matter of fact the attitude maintained by the British Government towards this particular point proved, in Lord Cecil's opinion, to be the final obstacle to agreement and the direct cause of the failure of the Conference.

Before the British delegates returned to Geneva an attempt was made by the Government to remove the suspicions of its motives which had arisen both in the United States and in Japan. On the 27th July statements were made by Lord ^{British} _{Government} ^{statements,} _{July 27,} Salisbury in the House of Lords and by Sir Austen Chamberlain in the House of Commons in which the most interesting passages ^{July 27,} 1927, dealt with the complicated nature of the problem of limitation of cruiser strength when it concerned the small vessels which were essential to the British Empire on account of its geographical and economic peculiarities. A simple formula like that adopted at Washington, it was explained, was quite inapplicable to vessels designed for purposes which must vary with the needs of the several Powers concerned. However, in the opinion of the Government "there need be no difficulty in arriving at a temporary arrangement about the immediate future of cruiser building. But the British Empire cannot be asked to give to any such temporary arrangement the appearance of an immutable principle which might be treated as a precedent. Any other course would inevitably be interpreted in the future as involving the formal surrender by the British Empire of maritime equality."

This last statement was understood to be an attempt to convey to the United States the British view that "mathematical parity" meant in practice American superiority,

whereras what had been contemplated, and within limits achieved, at Washington was practical or "equitable" parity. The view that mathematical parity meant practical American superiority appears to have been held by the whole Cabinet (and is widely held by expert opinion in Great Britain at the present time), and the division of opinion above referred to was over the question of expediency, the minority considering that acceptance of mathematical parity was preferable to allowing the Conference to break down.

British delegates return to Geneva new proposals made

When the British delegates arrived back at Geneva—the day following the statements in Parliament—it was found that the attitude of the Americans had stiffened on the subject of the number of large cruisers to be allowed to the three Powers under the compromise suggested by the Anglo-Japanese scheme, but this obstacle might have been got over if it had been found possible to clear away the difficulty regarding the calibre of gun to be allowed to the smaller type of cruisers. On this both sides¹ proved adamant (though Lord Cecil afterwards placed it on record that without a compromise on this point there was no hope of agreement), and the result was that a new set of British proposals, put forward on the same day—28th July—had little chance of a favourable reception from the United States, and, in fact, these were rejected on the ground that they would call for a much larger Navy than America considered necessary. It is, therefore, of little interest to describe them, except to say that they included the usual provision for the subdivision of cruisers into two classes, the smaller of which was to carry guns of not more than 6 inches calibre, and suggested 590,000 tons as the total tonnage to be allotted to Great Britain and the United States, with 385,000 tons to Japan, for cruisers, destroyers and submarines combined.

Mr. Gibson's proposal for inclusion of political clause in treaty

In spite of this, however, some further attempts were made by the United States and Japanese delegates to escape from the *impasse*. Mr. Gibson proposed the inclusion in the treaty of a political clause² under which, in the event of any of the contracting Powers considering that the tonnage allocation in the cruiser class had been utilised by either of the other Powers in a manner to call for an adjustment of the total tonnage

¹ The Japanese appear to have had no strong objection to a limit of 6 inches for the guns of this class of cruiser, but did not side whole-heartedly with the British delegation.

² He had previously suggested the inclusion of a similar provision in respect of the construction of 8-inch gun vessels.

allocation of that class, it would have the right to convoke a special meeting of the signatories to effect this adjustment by mutual agreement. Should this prove impossible, each of the contracting parties would be able to terminate the treaty by giving one year's notice of its desire to do so. The suggestion did not appeal to the British Government, however, and the British delegation was not empowered to discuss it.

A more sympathetic reception was given to a Japanese ^{pro-Japanese} proposal, under which Great Britain and Japan would undertake ^{proposal} to confine themselves until 1931 to naval building programmes

already authorised, while the United States would undertake not to exceed, during the same period, the British strength in auxiliary vessels, but to the American delegation this "naval holiday" type of agreement proved equally unacceptable ¹.

On the 4th August, Mr Gibson, as President of the Conference, ^{Final} announced the opening of "the final plenary session, which ^{plenary} session was to give an opportunity to the delegates to make a final survey of the divergencies that had rendered agreement impossible." This meant that all hope of saving the Conference had been abandoned, and it only remained for the heads of the several delegations to recapitulate their Governments' cases.

At this session Mr Bridgeman spoke first, but added nothing to what had been contained in his previous expositions of British policy. He confessed himself unable to understand the United States' objection to the limitation of the smaller cruisers to guns of 6-inch calibre, but assured the American delegation that the British attitude was "not due to fear of any unfriendly action on their part." He was followed by the Japanese delegate, whose principal point was that, while not assenting in principle to the British preference for 6-inch guns, his Government had consented not to let their own desire for a heavier gun stand in the way of a solution.

Mr Gibson was more controversial. Referring to the British ^{Mr. Gibson's} claim as to the absolute naval needs of the Empire, he said ^{speech} that the American delegation "had never been able to reconcile the conception of absolute naval needs with the negotiation of

¹ The reason for this appears to have been in large part that the British definition of "ships authorised" included ships projected but not yet appropriated for, and involved a cruiser tonnage of about 458,000 tons, a great increase over the existing total. In the United States "authorised" ships only included those already appropriated for (and, of course, those under construction)—often a very different thing.

a treaty to fix limitations on the basis of mutual concessions "¹ The American delegation had agreed to discuss the number of 10,000-ton cruisers and to accept a secondary class of cruisers, provided that the latter should not be of a maximum individual displacement which would preclude the mounting of 8-inch guns, and any further concessions would have involved a complete surrender of the right to build ships responsive to their needs. As they had not contested Britain's argument that her needs could best be met by a number of smaller vessels, they expected her to recognise America's claim that her geographical position and lack of bases necessitated a larger type of cruiser. The repeated expressions of willingness to reduce the total cruiser tonnage to the lowest level acceptable to Great Britain should afford sufficient evidence that no American programme of a kind to cause apprehension was contemplated. As a matter of fact, Great Britain already had five 10,000-ton cruisers practically completed, and six under construction, as well as four in commission of 9750 tons each,² while the United States had only two under construction and six recently contracted for. Turning to broader questions, Mr Gibson criticised the British description of 6-inch-gun cruisers as defensive weapons. These vessels, he was told, were intended to protect British commerce, "but in order to afford effective defence to commerce upon the seas these cruisers must in time of war effectively deny the sea to others." The British Government had at its disposal approximately 880,000 tons of fast merchant ships capable of being readily converted into cruisers and armed with many 6-inch guns, while the United States had only 188,000 tons of such ships, and consideration of this fact should influence the British Government in its attitude towards the question of 8-inch guns. Finally, the American delegation found it difficult "to reconcile the British conviction that war is already outlawed between us with their present unwillingness to recognise our right to build a limited number of the type of ships we would desire or with their willingness to risk the success of this Conference because they fear the problematical possession by us during the life of the treaty of the small number of 8-inch-gun cruisers."

¹ The fact was that the British Government was prepared to go all the way with the other two Powers in making "mutual concessions," but with the one qualification, that Britain's "absolute" needs in the "defensive" type of cruiser were first safeguarded.

² These four cruisers were armed with 7 5-inch guns.

Mr Gibson closed the session with the reading of an agreed statement, setting forth the point of view of each of the three Powers. According to this the immediate cause of the failure of the Conference was the inability to find an acceptable plan to reconcile "the claim of the British delegation for numbers of vessels, for the most part armed with 6-inch guns, with the desire of the American delegates for the lowest possible total tonnage limitation with freedom of armament within such limitation, subject to the restrictions as to armament already set by the Washington Treaty "

As will have been realised from the foregoing outline of the *Reasons for breakdown of Conference* proceedings, however, other causes entered into the failure of the three Powers to reach agreement. The relative parts played by these various causes in bringing about the breakdown of negotiations have been a matter of discussion and difference of opinion ever since Lord Cecil appears to have attached more importance to the deadlock which occurred over the question of gun calibre¹ than did the American delegates; in fact the State Department in Washington, as reported in *The Times*, maintained that the specific question regarding the guns in the smaller cruisers was never fully discussed, that it would only have arisen if and when the problem of total cruiser strength had been settled, and that this problem was not only never settled, but was the rock on which the Conference split.

How great a part was played by the press in magnifying the difficulties with which the delegates were continually being confronted is difficult to estimate with any accuracy. It is certain that many of the reports of what took place at the private discussions of the Technical Committee were inaccurate and sensational, while, in the case of the American press, influences were believed to have been exerted by the Big Navy Group and certain of the armament firms which were not in the best interests of the cause for which the Conference had been convened. The result was that a good deal of the time and attention of the delegates was taken up with efforts to remove the suspicion which had been engendered by misrepresentations of their respective cases.

The opinion most generally held, however, is that what

¹ Speaking in the House of Commons on the 14th March, 1929, Mr Bridgeman said that the Three-Power Conference "failed because we could not find a formula which could equate ships mounting 8-inch guns with ships mounting 6-inch guns. The reason for the breakdown of the Conference was that, although we agree on equality, we could not find a formula for it."

was more than anything else responsible for the failure of the negotiations was the absence of diplomatic preparation Speaking at Niagara Falls three days after the Conference had terminated, General Dawes said

"Perhaps before this Conference was held there was not the preliminary careful appraisement by each conferee of the necessities of the other, perhaps too exclusive concentration of each conferee upon the necessities of his own nation resulted in a predetermined ultimatum before a comparison of views. Perhaps the public announcement of respective programmes early in this conference produced fears of domestic public repercussion if they were reasonably modified, as would be necessary to effect an agreement."

The chief reason why these programmes could not be "reasonably modified" was that they were the work of technical experts who, in drawing them up, were all along concerned with securing for their respective countries the greatest possible offensive strength within the limits of the formula of parity. Naval experts are necessarily compelled to deal with the armaments problem with all the possible contingencies of war in their minds, and to think of war in terms of the offensive. This is inevitable, owing to their responsibility to the people of their respective countries to see that the national safety is not endangered, and the only way out would appear to be the handing over of the conduct of the negotiations to representatives who are not committed to rigid programmes drawn up to meet "absolute" needs or to secure superiority in offensive power.

In this particular instance it happened that, though politically the British and United States Governments were more or less of the same frame of mind (in agreeing to parity and desiring limitation and reduction of armaments), technically their aims were conflicting, and it was the technical considerations which weighed most heavily in the negotiations. The Americans were aiming at economy and offensive power coupled with parity, the British at economy and offensive power coupled with security, and they were each bent upon effecting their economies in the form that would best serve their other aims, which were conflicting. The elements of naval strength when measured against each other by experts could not be reduced to comparable numerical terms, a fact which had been realised by the French when they raised the question of the "potentials of war" at the meeting of the Preparatory Commission the previous spring. The discussions at Geneva three months later served to substantiate their contention

that the fighting force of a nation cannot be measured in terms of armaments and effectives without taking into account the totality of the national resources and geographical position. In respect of these factors the positions of the United States and of the British Empire differ fundamentally, and the corresponding difference in their armament needs makes real parity extremely difficult of attainment. As for mathematical parity, this was considered by the British delegation to involve real inferiority, owing to the necessity of keeping a large number of cruisers in far-distant waters. More than one British statesman in public utterances called in question the wisdom of attempting to reach an agreement with the United States on the basis of parity. Thus Mr Churchill, speaking

*Criticism of
principle of
mathematical
parity*

"The fundamental cause which prevented agreement lay in the different views taken of what constitutes naval equality by the Americans and ourselves. Therefore, we are not able now—and I hope at no future time—to embody in a solemn international agreement any words which would bind us to the principle of mathematical parity in naval strength. The doctrine of naval equality, if it is to be accepted by us, must take into consideration the whole position of the two countries on the sea, and their respective risks and vulnerability."¹

For a different reason, the acceptance of the principle of parity as the basis of negotiation was criticised by Lord Grey, who, in a letter to *The Times* on the 11th August, 1927, suggested that the theory of parity itself was "the rock on which the Conference was wrecked at Geneva," and said that it was working badly and that there was every sign that it would cause friction, and not harmony, between the two countries, because, though designed to avoid competition, it did in fact imply rivalry.

In the following November, Mr Ramsay MacDonald moved a vote of censure against the Government on the ground that the lack of preparation for the Conference and the military character of the British delegation had seriously contributed to the failure at Geneva. This failure he described as a natural one, "a failure in the nature of the case, and I say in pursuing security through peace, security through agreement, we will get round that problem, by trying to discover some means by which America and ourselves can come to an agreement, which

¹ On other occasions, also, Mr Churchill took occasion to denounce the principle of mathematical parity.

means that we need not bother about navies with regard to each other at all ”

*Reduction
of British
naval con-
struction
programme,
1927*

The British Government was determined not to allow the events at Geneva to affect its decision to follow a policy of limitation in naval armaments, and in November Mr Bridgeman announced in Parliament that two out of the three cruisers which were due to be laid down in the course of the year 1927 had been dropped. The three vessels in the existing programme included one of 10,000 tons and two smaller vessels, and the former was one of the two which were abandoned

*U.S. attitude
to failure of
Conference*

In the United States it was announced from the White House about the same time that the President did not expect either an increase or a diminution in the number of cruisers due to be built, and in a Message to Congress in December Mr Coolidge said that “ the failure to agree should not cause us to build either more or less than we otherwise should ”

VI. THE UNITED STATES NAVAL CONSTRUCTION (CRUISER) BILL

That the President’s statement was in accord with the general feeling of the majority in the United States was shown very soon afterwards when the Secretary of the Navy introduced a Bill into Congress providing for the construction of a large number of auxiliary vessels. This occurred in November 1927, and strong opposition showed itself throughout the country as soon as the terms of the Bill became known. They provided for the construction of 25 light cruisers,¹ 9 destroyer² leaders, 32 submarines and 5 aircraft carriers, and the aggregate cost was estimated at \$725,000,000, or approximately £145 million. As originally drafted the Bill fixed no time for the beginning or completion of the vessels enumerated, but the House Committee on Naval Affairs in January 1928 wrote into it an explicit time-limit of five years for laying down and eight for completing them, and struck out a clause which had given the President discretion to suspend construction in the event of an international conference taking place for the limitation of naval armaments. By this time the organised opposition to the Bill was making itself felt, among other ways by the representations of a number of religious and pacific organisations through deputations to the President, and the publica-

*Introduction
of Bill into
Congress,
Nov 1927*

¹ I e , cruisers of 10,000 tons

² Or flotilla leaders

tion of open letters denouncing the construction programme as calculated to make the American nation "appear insincere in its offer to negotiate treaties to renounce war as a measure of public policy"¹ Senator Borah, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, also attacked the Bill in Congress, describing it as certain to lead to war, and in February 1928 the Chairman of the House Committee announced that it would be withdrawn. In its place a new Bill was to be *Bill, revised* introduced for the construction of fifteen 10,000-ton cruisers and one aircraft carrier at an estimated total cost of \$274,000,000, a figure which was eventually reduced to \$268,000,000, or rather less than £54 million. In its final shape this Bill contained a clause giving the President discretion to suspend construction of the vessels, but only in the event of an international agreement for the further limitation of naval armaments having actually been reached, while a time-limit was included providing that the fifteen cruisers must be laid down within three years, and the aircraft carrier within five years.²

On the President letting it be known that he did not consider that there was anything in the programme thus outlined which could alarm any other country, the general weight of public opinion appears to have come round to the view that a moderate increase of cruiser strength was no more than the natural retort to the British attitude on the question of parity in cruisers at the unsuccessful Geneva Conference of the previous summer.³ Opposition to the Bill was no longer active

¹ It was at the end of 1927 (28th December) that Mr Kellogg sent his Note to M Briand suggesting the negotiation of an anti-war treaty.

² No date was mentioned for the completion of construction, though in the first draft of the Bill this had been fixed at six years.

³ It is interesting to note that when they made the calculations on which they based the building programme embodied in the first Bill (providing for 25 cruisers) the naval authorities in the United States found themselves making observations as to the "absolute" needs of their country which they were, apparently, unable to disregard even when insisting most strongly on the principle that naval needs should be conditional upon the position of other naval Powers. Thus, in the statement he issued to accompany the Bill, the Secretary for the Navy declared that "all naval armament is in a measure relative," that "our needs for naval vessels are relative," and that "in determining this need the General Board at all times has taken into consideration the condition of other navies and their construction and replacement program so far as they are known to us," but at the same time he said that his programme was "not based upon the strength of any prospective opposition," that the vessels for which he was asking were needed "as a defensive organisation without reference to the relative strength of other navies," and that the programme did "not cover all the foreign interests or trade routes" of the United States, but represented "a conservative estimate of actual needs."

*Passed by
House of
Representa-
tives, March
1928*

either in Congress or in the country generally, and on the 17th March, 1928, it passed the House of Representatives and went up to the Senate. Before it was dealt with by that body, however, the Kellogg Treaty for the Renunciation of War was signed (in Paris on the 27th August, 1928), but any tendency which this event might have had to modify the attitude adopted towards naval construction policy was counteracted by the circumstances in which the Anglo-French Naval Compromise¹ was concluded and its terms disclosed. The proposals this involved were rejected by the United States Government on the 28th September, 1928.

It was not until the 3rd January, 1929, that the Naval Construction Bill was introduced into the Senate,² and even then the debate on it was suspended until the Kellogg Pact had been dealt with. This passed the Senate on the 15th January, and on the following day the debate on the Naval Construction Bill was reopened in a speech by Senator Swanson. The main points at issue were raised some days later by Senator Borah, who pleaded for the exclusion of the time-limits, but his motion to that effect was rejected on the 4th February by 54 votes to 28. Before this occurred the views of the President on this particular point had been made known, and were to the effect that he was opposed to the retention of the limit, but on financial and not on diplomatic grounds. Mr Coolidge also allowed it to be understood that, in his opinion, any action that could possibly be foreseen by a future conference for the limitation of armaments would have no bearing on the question of the adoption of the Bill, and it was added that, if the Bill passed the Senate with the time-limit omitted, the President would expect to transmit immediately to Congress a budget recommendation for the beginning of building operations.

This aspect of the matter had not been lost sight of by Mr Coolidge, who was believed to have received assurances from the Leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives before he signed the Bill that the funds necessary for starting the construction programme could be found without disturbing the balancing of the Budget.

¹ See p. 23 *et seq.*, above.

² In his speech introducing the Bill, the Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee said that the total volume of American overseas trade (\$9,000 million) was as great as that of Great Britain, while the American mercantile marine was only half that of Great Britain, which had 227 merchant vessels of 4,000 tons with a speed of at least fifteen knots and capable of mounting 6-inch guns.

The Bill was eventually passed by the Senate on the 5th February by 68 votes to 12, the Senate's amendments were agreed to by the House of Representatives two days later, and on the 13th February, 1929, it was signed by the President. On the 22nd February the Senate passed a further Bill providing \$12,370,000 to enable work on the new cruisers to be begun.

The following are the principal clauses of the Naval Construction Bill.

The President of the United States is hereby authorised to undertake, prior to 1st July, 1931, the construction of fifteen light cruisers and one aircraft carrier according to the following programme

(a) Five light cruisers during each of the fiscal years ending 30th June, 1929, 1930 and 1931, the cost including armour and armament not to exceed \$17,000,000 each

(b) One aircraft carrier prior to 30th June, 1930, the cost, including armour and armament, not to exceed \$19,000,000. Provided, that if the construction of any vessel herein authorised to be undertaken in the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1929 or 1930, is not undertaken in that fiscal year, such construction may be undertaken in the next succeeding fiscal year

Section 4—In the event of an international agreement, which the President is requested to encourage, for the further limitation of naval armament to which the United States is signatory, the President is hereby authorised and empowered to suspend in whole or in part any of the naval construction authorised under the Act

VII. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CONVERSATIONS IN 1929

Meanwhile, the fortunes of the U.S. Naval Construction Bill had been followed with interest on the other side of the Atlantic. On the 6th February, 1929, the British Foreign Secretary informed Parliament that the Government were engaged in the careful examination of "all questions concerning our relations with America and the naval conditions of the two countries". As soon as this examination had been concluded the first step would be to communicate its results to the Dominions, and to receive and consider their views. This was in reply to questions

*Statement
by British
Ambassador
in Washington, Feb.
1929*

suggesting that less progress had been made in the Anglo-American conversations regarding disarmament than had been hoped for. Some days later, on the 15th February, Sir Esmé Howard made a statement in Washington suggesting that the delay in the passing of the Naval Construction Bill by Congress might have had something to do with retarding the British efforts towards further discussion of disarmament, because so long as the Bill was under consideration any proposal to renew the conversations on the subject might have been interpreted as an attempt to interfere with the passage of the Bill. Now, however, that the measure had been passed the ground was clear for further consideration of the question between the two countries.

*British
Foreign
Office
statement*

This expression of opinion called forth the issue of a statement by the British Foreign Office the following day, pointing out that there had been no change in the situation since the Foreign Secretary's statement in Parliament on the 6th February, and a few days later, on the 22nd February, Sir Austen Chamberlain gave a hint that the Government was not being neglectful of its duty when he said, in a speech at Torquay, 'I am confident that it will be within our power to make proposals to the United States which will place our friendship on that firm footing which is not only our interest, but, I believe, the interest of the world at large.'

*/ British Navy
Estimates for
1929*

Early in March the British Navy Estimates for 1929 were published, showing a net total expenditure of £55,865,000, or £1,435,000 less than in 1928. An animated debate on the Estimates followed on their introduction in Parliament, and on 14th March the First Lord of the Admiralty said that as far as cruiser construction was concerned the programme adopted in 1925 had been severely pruned. In the current year, for the second time since 1925,¹ two of the three new cruisers, instead of being of the 10,000-ton class, would be comparatively small vessels armed with 6-inch guns. The whole programme was, in fact, one of replacement only, and if continued at the rate of three cruisers a year would result by 1940 in a total cruiser strength of 50 vessels only, as compared with 52 in the current year, and 114 in 1914.

*President
Hoover's
statement,
4th March,
1929*

Meanwhile, President Hoover had taken the first step towards carrying out his programme of active participation in the pursuit of peace. On the occasion of taking the oath

¹ In 1927-28 three cruisers of 8,400 tons with 8-inch guns were dropped out of the programme.

of office on 4th March he referred to the signature of the Kellogg Pact and said—

“ Its acceptance should pave the way to the greater limitation of armaments, the offer of which we sincerely extend to the world, but its full realisation also implies a greater and greater perfection in the instrumentalities for the pacific settlement of controversies between the nations. In the creation and use of these instrumentalities we should support every sound method of conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement ”

After expressing the hope that a way would be found to enable the United States Government to adhere to the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, Mr Hoover concluded

“ Peace can be contributed to by respect for our ability in defence. Peace can be promoted by the limitation of aims, and by the creation of the instrumentalities for the peaceful settlement of controversies. But it will become a reality only through self-restraint and active effort in friendliness and helpfulness. I covet for this Administration a record of having further contributed to the advance of the cause of peace ”

✓ On 10th April the appointment of General Dawes as Ambassador to Great Britain was announced, and from that date it may be said that active negotiations were entered into for the settlement between the United States and Great Britain of such questions as had hitherto stood in the way of effective co-operation in the work of naval disarmament

The sixth session of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference met at Geneva on 15th April, in an atmosphere clouded by the fresh difficulties which resulted from the failure of the Three Power Naval Conference in August 1927, and the reception accorded the Anglo-French Naval Compromise of the summer of 1928, both of which had exerted an unfortunate influence on Anglo-American relations. The Commission had been in session for six days when, on the 22nd April, Mr Hugh Gibson, the United States delegate, made a speech containing proposals which immediately attracted the attention of the whole world. Only the Great Powers, he declared, could initiate measures of reduction, and it would have to be “ reduction ” rather than “ limitation ”. Above all, what was essential was a condition of mind—the psychology of peace—to match the new situation brought into existence by the Kellogg Pact. “ Disarmament, ” he

General Dawes appointed Ambassador to Great Britain

Sixth session of League of Nations Preparatory Commission

U.S. proposals

said, "will only follow from a change of attitude towards the use of force in the settlement of international disputes," and then, turning to the broad principles which should govern the negotiations for naval limitation between his country and Great Britain, he said, "My Government has always felt that we need no exact balance of ships and guns, which can be based only on the idea of conflict, what is really wanted is a common-sense agreement based on the idea that we are going to be friends and settle our problems by peaceful means."

Mr Gibson then made the following declaration

"My Government is disposed to give full and friendly consideration to any supplementary methods of limitation which may be calculated to make our proposals, the French thesis, or any other acceptable to other Powers, and if such a course appears desirable, my Government will be prepared to give consideration to a method of estimating equivalent naval values which takes account of other factors than displacement tonnage alone. In order to arrive at a basis of comparison in the case of categories in which there are marked variations as to unit characteristics, it might be desirable in arriving at a formula for estimating equivalent tonnage to consider certain factors which produce these variations, such as age, unit displacement, and calibre of guns. My Government has given careful consideration to various methods of comparison and the American delegation will be in a position to discuss the subject whenever it comes before the Commission."

The French thesis to which Mr Gibson gave his approval was the compromise¹ put forward at the end of the third session of the Commission in April 1927.

British attitude Lord Cushendun followed Mr Gibson with a speech in which he expressed full agreement with the American standpoint, and said that Great Britain, too, desired reduction rather than mere limitation of naval strength, and wished the process to be applied to all classes of vessels.

Two days later the British Foreign Secretary made further reference to the American proposals in a statement in Parliament. The great principles of aiming at reduction instead of limitation, of extending reduction to every class of naval vessel, and of parity in naval strength were, said Sir Austen Chamberlain, already agreed. The only difference between the United States and Great Britain in the previous negotiations had been the delineation of the categories of naval vessels.

¹ See p. 21, above

The new American suggestions contained new criteria of delineation which promised greater elasticity, and they had been noted with much interest by the British Government. They would accordingly be examined in the same cordial and earnest spirit as that which had inspired their enunciation.

The Preparatory Commission closed its session on 6th May without completing the second reading of the draft convention on disarmament, contained in the report of the Commission adopted at its meeting in April 1927,¹ since it was decided to adjourn consideration of the section dealing with naval disarmament in order to give time for its proper examination, in other words, for the Governments concerned to examine the suggestions made by the United States' delegate.

The next direct step came from Mr Hoover, who took the opportunity in his Memorial Day Speech on 30th May to develop still further his plans for naval reduction. If the Kellogg Pact was to fulfil its high purpose, he said, the nations of the world would have to "clothe faith and idealism with action," which would have to "march with the inexorable tread of common sense and realism to accomplishment." He continued

"But to arrive at any agreement through which we can, marching in company with our brother nations, secure a reduction of armament but at the same time maintain a just preparedness for the protection of our peoples we must find a rational yardstick with which to make reasonable comparisons of their naval units and ours and thus maintain an agreed relativity."

"So far the world has failed to find such a yardstick. To say that such a measure cannot be found is the counsel of despair, it is a challenge to the naval authorities of the world, it is the condemnation of the world to the Sisyphean toil of competitive armaments."

"The present administration of the United States has undertaken to approach this vital problem with a new programme. We feel that it is useless for us to talk of the limitation of arms if such limitations are to be set so high as virtually to be an incitement to increase armament."

Fresh support for the President was given on the following day by the Secretary of State, Mr Stimson, who in a public statement laid stress upon the economic as well as the moral aspect of the armaments question, drawing attention to the fact that a modern capital ship cost between thirty and forty million dollars, while the cost of the programme recommended

¹ See p. 20, above

by the Navy Department totalled, for new ships alone, \$1,170,800,000 (say £234,100,000)

Meanwhile a General Election had taken place in Great Britain, resulting in the Labour Party obtaining a majority and in Mr Ramsay MacDonald forming a Cabinet on 7th June. Rumours almost immediately became current that he intended paying a visit to Washington at an early date for a personal conference with President Hoover on Anglo-American relations in general and naval reduction in particular. The following week, on 14th June, General Dawes arrived in England, and a new element was at once introduced into the proceedings. From mid-Atlantic the new Ambassador made arrangements to present his credentials to the King the day after he landed at Liverpool, and after being received at Windsor on 15th June he proceeded straight to Scotland to meet the Prime Minister. The result of their conversation at Forres on 16th June was made known to the public by a joint *communiqué*, which was couched in the following terms.

*Conversations between
Mr. Mac-
Donald and
General
Dawes, June
1929*

"We have had a conversation regarding the present position of the question of naval disarmament as between the United States and Great Britain. It has been informal and general and most satisfactory. His Excellency proposes to refer to this subject at the Pilgrims' Dinner on Tuesday night, and I shall do the same almost at the same time at Lossiemouth. This is intended to be the beginning of the negotiations. We both wish to make it clear that the other naval Powers are expected to co-operate in these negotiations, upon the successful consummation of which the peace of the whole world must depend."

In his speech at Lossiemouth on 18th June Mr. MacDonald said that he and General Dawes had not met to threaten other nations, or to form alliances and pacts, and had no intention of presenting to the nations an accomplished fact, which they could either take or leave. They had met in the hope that they might be instrumental in preparing a board round which the other nations might ultimately sit in co-operative fellowship, studying the arts and ways of peace, gaining a sense of security not by arms, but by the absence of them.

On the same evening General Dawes was entertained in London by the Pilgrims and spoke of the proposed agreement in greater detail. The procedure, as he outlined it, fell into three stages.

(1) That the naval experts of each country should work out separate formulas for the "yardstick"—to which President Hoover

had already referred—for the valuation of the comparative fighting strengths of naval units

(2) That the experts should report each to his respective Government and that a conference of statesmen would then be called to frame an agreed formula applicable to all fleets

(3) This formula would then be written into a diplomatic agreement for the reduction of naval armaments

General Dawes particularly emphasised the necessity that the final agreement on naval reduction should be couched in terms understandable by the ordinary man in the street, and that any agreement upon a method of negotiation for naval reduction would have to have not a partial but a world sanction

In Japan the anxiety which had at first arisen at the news of the Forres conversation was dispelled by General Dawes' speech and satisfaction was expressed that there was no intention of presenting to the world an Anglo-American *fait accompli*. With regard to the "yardstick" Japanese naval authorities described it as "not impossible, but very difficult". As was to be expected, opinion in Germany expressed great satisfaction at this new step towards international disarmament, but considerable reserve was shown in the reception given it in France and Italy.

The United States Government showed no sign of allowing the question to lapse, and on 24th June Mr Gibson arrived in London to confer with General Dawes on the question of giving practical form to the proposals already made. That Great Britain was equally anxious for the immediate putting into effect of the new proposals was evident from the following passage from the King's Speech read to Parliament on 2nd July.

"Conversations have commenced with the Ambassador of the United States of America on the subject of naval disarmament, in consequence of which it is the earnest hope of My Government to ensure, in co-operation with My Governments in the Dominions, the Government of India and the Governments of foreign Powers, an early reduction of armaments throughout the world."

Meanwhile, prolonged conversations had been taking place in London between the Prime Minister and the two American representatives, and on 25th June Mr MacDonald announced that as a result of their meetings he was "decidedly hopeful" as to good progress being made.

Difficulties of problem

That he was not unduly optimistic was proved by subsequent events, but the task of the heads of the two Governments was an exceedingly difficult one, owing to causes of which a word may be said here. In addition to considering public opinion in their own countries and their requirements in respect of defence, Mr Hoover and Mr MacDonald, as already indicated, had continually to keep before them the necessity of (neither saying nor doing anything which could possibly give the impression abroad that they contemplated any form of alliance between America and Great Britain, or that they were aiming at presenting the other naval Powers with a *fait accompli* as regards a programme of naval limitation.) They were careful to keep before their minds the fact that the other Powers regarded many of the aspects of the problem of disarmament from a point of view very different from their own. To give only two instances, the French Government made a great point of the necessity, in its view, of dealing with the question of naval disarmament only as part of the whole problem of disarmament on land, sea and in the air, for which reason it regarded the work of the proposed naval conference merely as a preliminary to the meeting of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission at Geneva. Again, French opinion was supported by that of Italy and Japan in declining to consider any scheme of naval reduction which would deprive those countries of the right to maintain a fleet of submarines sufficiently large to be effective, in their view, for the defence of their coasts, and the conversations between Mr Hoover and Mr MacDonald were accordingly carefully confined to consideration of the particular differences of view that had in the past prevented agreement between their two countries as regards cruisers alone.

Mr Stimson's efforts to prevent press misrepresentations

Accordingly, one of the chief tasks of the spokesmen on both sides was to prevent and correct wrong impressions given by statements in the press and elsewhere such as might be calculated to mislead public opinion at home, as well as abroad, as to the real purpose of the conversations. Thus, on the 1st July, Mr Stimson, the United States Secretary of State, took occasion to emphasise that no agreement was aimed at which could possibly have the air of an exclusively Anglo-American arrangement, and at the same time answered a report which, according to the New York press, was being circulated in England—"a considerable feeling," was the description given

of it—that, after the creation of an atmosphere excluding Anglo-American war, "to turn to an effort to establish that, in the case of a next war—which is never to occur—the warships of the two countries should be able to shoot on a parity, seems to be little in the spirit of the occasion," since "it is no way to begin discussions of future perpetual peace by arguing about the tools of war"

Mr. Stimson stated that, in his opinion, the doctrine of parity was of very great importance, not as a means of determining how the nations were to shoot at each other, but as a means of helping them to agree not to do so, since the minute they agreed not to outbuild each other they were taking one of the longest steps possible towards not having a war. Later he developed the same idea in a statement issued to the press on the 25th July with the object of defining the attitude of the Administration towards the principle of parity. This, he said, should not be regarded in the light of a military doctrine at all, but as a doctrine of statesmanship, which contemplated the preclusion of any conflict between the two countries, and aimed at effecting the reduction of their respective naval power

On another occasion, on the 12th July, he found it necessary to issue an emphatic denial that anything in the nature of a *fiat* was to be despatched to the other naval Powers insisting that the principle of parity should be honoured in any disarmament agreement that might be arrived at. In this, he said, there was not one iota of truth

The last occasion in which he was compelled to intervene was on the 11th October, when a statement was published in Europe suggesting that Great Britain and the United States had arranged to pool their fleets in the event of war. Mr. Stimson said that this report so completely misconceived and misrepresented the actual facts and the spirit of their conference that he could not let it pass without reply. The tenor of their conversations had been exactly the reverse, the understanding aimed at was a moral one, as the influence they were seeking to exert was a moral, and not a military influence. He concluded by saying that the basis of all their discussions was the Kellogg Pact

Enough has been said to make clear some of the difficulties met with by the heads of the two Governments, quite apart from those inherent in the problem of reconciling the British

and American views as to the lines on which parity should be reached in cruiser strength, and as to the method by which armaments reduction should be effected

M. Hoover's statement on military expenditure, 23rd July, 1929

The next important landmarks in the negotiations were statements made by both the British Premier and the American President. On the 23rd July Mr. Hoover issued a statement on military expenditure in which he reminded the country that "our whole situation is certainly modified" by the existence of the Kellogg Pact, and said that "the American people should understand that the current expenditure on the strictly military activities (*i.e.* omitting pensions, etc.) of the Army and Navy constitutes the largest military Budget of any nation in the world to-day"¹ He added that the total cost of the Army and Navy was increasing at the rate of approximately \$50 millions a year.

Suspension of British naval construction

On the following day Mr. MacDonald announced in the House of Commons that it had been decided to suspend all work on the 10,000-ton cruisers *Surrey* and *Northumberland*, to cancel the submarine dépôt ship *Maidstone*, as also two contract submarines, and to slow down all Government dock-yard work. As regards the 1929-30 construction programme no decisions were yet to be made, and in any case no commitments for building were to be entered into before the autumn. In explanation of these decisions the Prime Minister said that material progress had been made towards agreement with America. The British Government had definitely agreed to the principle of parity, on the allowance of a measure of elasticity to meet the differing peace requirements of the two nations, and upon determining that technical points should not be allowed to override great public issues. He added that the other naval Powers were being kept informed of the trend of the talks he had been having with the United States Ambassador.

U.S. suspension of naval construction

On the same day Mr. Hoover proclaimed the Kellogg Pact effective, and immediately on learning of Mr. MacDonald's statement announced that though the "actual construction of three 10,000-ton cruisers due to be begun this fall would not be likely in themselves to produce inequality in the final result we do not wish to have any misunderstanding of our actions, and therefore we shall not lay these keels until there

¹ The amount spent on the Navy in the United States, as also in Great Britain, is over £100 a minute

has been an opportunity for full consideration of their effect upon the final agreement for parity which we expect to reach " Mr Hoover continued " Mr MacDonald has introduced the principle of parity, which we have now adopted, and its consummation means that Great Britain and the United States henceforth are not to compete in armaments as potential opponents, but to co-operate as friends in their reduction "

References to Mr MacDonald's statement were also made the next day by Mr Stimson, who characterised the British Government's decision as " an immense and tremendous step forward towards an accord between the two nations," adding that the " explicit and formal " concession now made for the first time by the British Government was the first step in the forward progress The two statements together, those of the Prime Minister and the President, were considered by the press to " tend to create a new atmosphere in Anglo-American relations "

Only a few days later, on the 31st July, Mr Hoover addressed a letter to the American Legion in which he explained that " parity with Great Britain is enunciated by our naval authorities as a complete defence of the United States in any contingency, and defence is all we seek "

Meanwhile, further conversations had been held between Mr MacDonald and General Dawes, whose reports were considered at length at several meetings called by the President at the White House Mr Hoover now had to deal with considerable criticism at home On the 2nd August, Senator Borah published a statement in which he said that nothing but " parity coupled with reduction " would satisfy him, in other words, that this must *not* be obtained by building up to Great Britain As the statement was issued the day following a prolonged conversation between the Senator and the President it was assumed that the latter probably shared this view, but his gesture as to the postponement of the building of the three 1929-30 cruisers was met by charges by Senator Swanson, among others, that this action was contrary to law

On the 20th August a further statement was published by Mr MacDonald, in the form of a report on a further series of meetings he had had with General Dawes in Scotland The Premier said they had been working at the question of how to reconcile three positions American claims to parity, British necessities, " which have no relation at all with American

building", and the desire, common to both Governments, to reduce armaments. Considerable progress had been made, but "both of us are fully aware," he concluded, "that no agreement between us two can carry us very far unless other Powers agree, and that conditions all our work"

This statement was supplemented three days later by a speech by General Dawes at Elgin, in which he said that though the negotiations had been progressing favourably they had not yet reached the proper stage for useful discussion in detail in the press. He continued

"The arbitrator of the ultimate fate of this naval effort will be the respective public sentiments of the naval Powers. Time must be taken to reduce to their simplest terms, before their public discussion, the problems it involves, so that the average man can then understand better what it is all about. If the problem is not mastered so that its final solution is clear and satisfactory to the average man, Parliaments and Congresses may not ratify it in the end. The one unforgivable thing would be an inadequate preparation for the proposed naval conference."

Mr. MacDonald's speech before League of Nations Assembly, 3rd Sept., 1929

The next stage was marked by Mr MacDonald's speech before the Assembly of the League of Nations on the 3rd September. After outlining the principles which were guiding British foreign policy, he said that he hoped within a few days to be able to publish the details of a projected naval agreement with the United States Government, since 17 out of the 20 points under discussion had already been settled, but this, he was careful to add, was to be regarded merely as a preliminary to the calling of a five-Power naval conference, at which all would be free to negotiate as though no conversations had taken place between Great Britain and America. This announcement was apparently looked upon as slightly too optimistic by the United States Secretary of State, for on the following day he issued a statement in which he said "we have been making hopeful progress, but we feel it will still require a considerable period of hard work on details before an agreement on parity can be concluded."

Reported details of Anglo-American agreement

On the same day, 4th September, the press at Genova published details of a number of points on which agreement was believed, on trustworthy authority, to have been reached in principle. These were

The whole accord was to be definitely linked to the Kellogg Pact, and to assume naval co-operation, and not naval antagonism.

- Parity or equality to be applicable to every class of vessel.
- Reduction of naval strength and not merely its limitation
- Progressive reduction over a period of years, to be effected by the non-replacement of obsolete vessels
- Prolongation of the active life of all warships
- ✓ A total tonnage limitation for destroyers and submarines
- ✓ Application of the " yardstick " to cruisers only
- The definite relegation of small cruisers to a " police " class, which would not be computed in naval strength, or not, at any rate, by the same measurement as of the large cruisers

Speculation as to the exact nature of the points *not* yet settled was somewhat overshadowed, in the United States at least, by the appearance in the press of a somewhat sensational story regarding the activities of a certain Mr Shearer, who had been employed by three prominent shipbuilding firms as an observer at the Three Power Naval Conference of 1927.

On the 6th September the President himself issued a statement denouncing Mr. Shearer's actions in strong terms, and explaining that he wished to make quite clear his determination that the Administration's international negotiations should not be interfered with from such sources or through such methods. The immediate result of this was the decision of the Naval Affairs Committee of Congress, announced on 10th September, to hold an investigation into Mr Shearer's activities at Geneva and his connection with shipbuilding companies, followed by a further statement by the President urging that the question "should be gone into to the very bottom". On 11th September the Senate ordered an official investigation of the activities of American shipbuilding corporations at the Three Power Naval Conference of 1927, and this investigation is still proceeding.

A semi-official statement was issued in Washington, on the 6th September, intimating that Great Britain had acknowledged the right of the United States to have more 10,000-ton cruisers than herself, and that the United States had, on her side, recognised the British right to have a larger total cruiser tonnage.

On the 9th September a further statement was made reporting the receipt of proposals from Great Britain suggesting the adoption of the figure of 340,000 tons as her maximum total cruiser strength, and of 295,000 to 305,000 tons for the United States, which would be allowed eighteen 10,000-ton

vessels, or three more than Great Britain. The statement also announced that the two nations had reached agreement regarding the postponement of the replacement of battleships and the fixing of the total tonnage for destroyers and submarines. On 11th September a further conference was held at the White House to consider and reply to the British proposal.

On the next day Mr MacDonald, after studying the United States' reply to the proposals just mentioned, stated that the margin of difference between the views of the two Governments related to three 8-inch gun 10,000-ton cruisers¹. On the same day the official announcement was made that he would leave England for New York on 28th September.

The negotiations had now been narrowed down to a point at which Mr Stimson was able to say that they were not even discussing tonnage, but only the question of a type of gun, which, he said, "gives an idea of how near we are together on the broad side of the picture". In a statement issued on 13th September the Secretary of State said the Government was now ready for a conference with the other four Powers. The main differences with Great Britain would be "ironed out" at the conference, and he again reminded the country that if the programme already sanctioned for the Navy were completed, it would cost the equivalent of over £234 millions, not counting vastly increased expenses of operation.

On the same day Mr MacDonald gave an interviewer a statement for the *Petit Parisien*, emphasising that the British Government's aim was to maintain the closest co-operation with France, who was assured that there could never be an alliance of any kind whatever from which she would be excluded.

Just at this time the American papers were full of comparative tables of the tonnages of the various types of vessel in the British and United States Navies, and of what were perhaps really only intelligent guesses as to the exact nature of the cuts to be made in both fleets. On 14th September the

¹ The United States claimed the right to possess twenty-one 8-inch-gun vessels, and fifteen with 6-inch guns. To possess twenty-one 8-inch-gun cruisers, the United States would have to build thirteen out of the fifteen vessels sanctioned by Congress. This would give her a total tonnage of 315,000, as against the British total of approximately 340,000 tons. Great Britain was averse to the United States possessing more than eighteen of the heavily-gunned vessels, on the ground that this might lead to competitive building on the part of other Powers, and so complicate the situation in the Pacific or elsewhere.

Navy Department published tables of the respective tonnages, *Tonnage tables published by U S Navy Department, Sept 1929* which attributed to Great Britain a total of 1,345,232 tons and to the United States 1,293,972 tons. The cruiser tonnages were given as 311,991 and 70,500 respectively, but the United States had 130,000 actually building and a further 100,000 authorised. A day or two later semi-official statements were made public according to which the two Governments were understood to be agreed as to the desirability of cutting a total of 200,000 tons of destroyers from the combined fleets of both countries, leaving from 125,000 to 150,000 tons for each, and on September 19th the Navy Department announced that orders had already been issued that 53 destroyers were to be placed out of commission. Submarines were not to be replaced when obsolete, and the same method was to be applied to battleships.

On 16th September it was allowed to be understood that the British Government did not claim the right to possess more than 50 cruisers,¹ of which 15 should be of 10,000 tons with 8-inch guns. ✓

On 17th September the British Premier informed the French, Italian and Japanese Governments that invitations were to be sent to them to attend a conference to be held in London on January 20th or 21st, and a day or two later it was stated in Washington that the Secretary of State had been in personal touch with the Ambassadors of those countries regarding the progress of events, and had all along kept the European Governments concerned, including that of Spain, informed of the results of the Anglo-American conversations. The necessity, equally important, of keeping their own people informed was not lost sight of by him or by the President, and on 18th September Mr Hoover broadcast by wireless a statement regarding the policy of the Government. This he described as actuated by the conviction that naval and military "preparedness must not exceed the barest necessity for defence or it becomes a threat against others and thus a cause of fear and animosity of the world." He concluded his message with the words, "Confidence that there will be peace is the first necessity of human progress."

Mr MacDonald also issued two statements, one on 27th September and the other on the following day, on his departure

¹ The number mentioned as the minimum necessary for Imperial defence in 1927 was 70

from Southampton. In the first he emphasised the importance of terminating the deadlock arrived at at Geneva in 1927 as an essential preliminary to progress in naval disarmament, and in the second he took equal care to reassure the Continental countries and Japan regarding the conversations he had been having with General Dawes, and said .

“ Any agreement we achieve can only be, and is only intended to be, a preliminary to the larger agreement which must be reached in conference with the other naval Powers, and later on in the Preparatory Disarmament Commission sitting at Geneva we are not trying to present any other nation or nations with a *fait accompli* which they must take or leave ”

✓ Mr. MacDonald reached New York on 4th October, and in his speech replying to an address of welcome, emphasised the fact that he came to the United States not as the leader of a political party, but as the representative of the British people and of a united nation Two days later appeared the announcement regarding the invitations to the Naval Conference which were being issued on 7th October to the other three Powers The text of these was published on 8th October,¹ and contained a suggestion that informal conversations on points requiring elucidation should be continued between the interested Governments before the opening of the Conference. It was hoped in this way to provide for that preliminary diplomatic preparation, the absence of which has been considered so largely responsible for the failure at Geneva in August 1927 Meanwhile, Mr. MacDonald had spent the week-end of October 5-7th as Mr Hoover's guest in the country, and on his return to Washington a joint *communiqué* was issued in which the two statesmen confined themselves to reporting that they had made gratifying progress in their frank review of all the questions which might give rise to friction between their two peoples Mr Hoover supplemented this the next day by a statement to the press in which he said that they were fortunate in not having any controversies between the two countries to be settled and they were therefore able to discuss their mutual problems “ in the long-distance view, and solely in the broad aspect of human welfare in the largest sense ” Mr Macdonald, on his side, had sought to make clear to the American public the British Government's conception of the lines on which its foreign policy was to be conducted

Invitations sent, Oct 7, 1929

¹ See Appendix IV.

by a speech before the Senate on 7th October, in which he said that when Britain signed the Kellogg Pact, she meant it to be the guiding idea in future policy, and he went on, "If we do our duty in making it effective, it can only mean that no section of our arms on sea, on land or in the air can ever come into hostile conflict again."

A more detailed joint statement was issued on 9th October.¹ *Joint Statement* *Mr Hoover and M*
This was received with much satisfaction on both sides of the *Atlantic*, *The Times*, for example, describing it as "a hopeful and *MacDonald, Oct 9, 1929* preface to a more intensive study of international relations *U S reply to invitation to Conference* in which disarmament will be linked with a fundamental re-survey of the functions of fleets in the future and of the conceptions of security that should properly determine them."

The formal acceptance by the United States Government of the British Government's invitation to the naval conference was received on 10th October,² and was followed by that of Italy on 15th October, and of France and Japan the following day. Meanwhile, on 11th October, Mr Macdonald had made another speech in New York which was broadcast throughout the country, and was notable for the appeal he made to the American people to make allowances for the great importance attached to the Navy by the British people

"In our case [he said] the Navy is the very life of our nation. We have romance surrounding it, we are a people of the sea, we are a small island, Europe is at our doors, for good or for ill the lines of our Empire have been thrown all over the face of the earth, we have to import our food, a month's blockade, effectively carried out, would starve us all in the event of any conflict Britain's Navy is Britain itself"

The British Premier's stay in the United States came to an end on 15th October, when he left for Canada. His visit was described in the press as having definitely established the co-operative, as distinct from the competitive, method as that to be followed in the discussion of future Anglo-American problems

While in Canada Mr MacDonald made a further reference to the object of his visit in a speech at Ottawa, when he said that on his return to London he intended to begin conversations with

¹ See Appendix V

² The American Note, in accepting the invitation, stated that the Conference "will unite the Powers signatory to the Washington Treaty in a discussion which will anticipate the problem raised under Article XXI of that Treaty, as well as broaden its whole scope by the inclusion of other categories of ships"

France, Italy and Japan "in the same frank, free and open way that has characterised the conversations between the United States and ourselves. The world is not the United States plus ourselves. Had that been the case we should have come to an agreement a week after the negotiations started."

French reply

In the reply of the French Government to the British Government's invitation an intimation was given of the views which were later developed in greater detail in a Memorandum of the 20th December¹. The reply noted that the express object of the initiative of the British Government was to facilitate the task of the Preparatory Commission and that of the future General Conference for the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments. The French Government could not but rejoice at such a proposal and was, therefore, happy to accept the invitation. It also welcomed the intention of the British Government that preliminary exchanges of view should be undertaken as to the questions which were to be included in the programme of their deliberations.

Italian reply

The Italian reply was unreserved acceptance, and the proposal to exchange views immediately was welcomed, but occasion was taken to remind the British Government that the

✓ Italian Government's attitude towards general disarmament had often been expressed, and most recently in the Note of the 6th October, 1928, addressed to the British Embassy in Rome²

Japanese reply

The Japanese reply was also an acceptance without reservation, accompanied by a statement that it was not merely

✓ limitation but reduction of armaments which should be aimed at. The suggestion as to preliminary conversations was welcomed, and the British Government was assured of the cordial support of Japan for the principle that the Kellogg Pact should be taken as the starting-point for all discussions on armaments.³ Simultaneously in Japan itself the Foreign Minister issued a statement to the effect that the preliminary discussions, on which the Government's reply to the British

¹ See Appendix VI

² This was published in London on 8th October, 1928. It upheld the Italian thesis of the interdependence of all armaments and the extension of the principle of limitation to all States. It also reiterated the statement made by the Premier in June 1928, when he said that Italy was ready to accept *a priori* as the limit of her armaments any figures, however low, provided they were not exceeded by any other continental European Power. It also repudiated its previous declaration in favour of limitation by tonnage as a whole instead of by classes of ships.

³ This was in contradistinction to the French thesis that the League Covenant rather than the Pact was the proper basis.

invitation had laid stress, had in view no "agreement or understanding of any kind to the prejudice of any third party" As earnest of its intention to lose no time in following up the matter the Government announced the names of its delegates to the Conference only two or three days later, on the same day, in fact, on which a similar statement was made in Washington as to the personnel of the United States delegation

In a statement made to the House of Commons on the 5th November regarding his activities in America, Mr MacDonald described as one of the principal landmarks in his visit, Mr Hoover's agreement with him to examine frankly and jointly with the British Government the questions of belligerent rights, generally known as "the freedom of the seas" and *The question of freedom of the seas* fortified naval bases The world was very soon afterwards reminded of this when Mr Hoover, in his Armistice Day speech, /put forward a suggestion that food ships might be placed on the same footing as hospital ships in time of war, but the varied expressions of view which this proposal called, forth have no immediate bearing on the problems to be dealt with in London, since only two days earlier Mr MacDonald told his audience at the Lord Mayor's banquet that the question of the freedom of the seas would not be raised at the forthcoming Conference¹ Other points made by the President on the 11th November may, however, be regarded as forecasts of the policy to be followed in London After referring to the large numbers of men under arms in Europe, Mr. Hoover said that the people of America did not wish to have one gun or one armed man beyond what was necessary for defence alone, and they would reduce their naval strength in proportion to any other, "it only remains for the others to say how low they will go It cannot be too low for us "

Other developments of the week were the announcement in Singapore London that pending the results of the work of the Naval base work Conference no new work would be embarked on at the Singapore Naval Base, the work already contracted for being slowed down as much as possible, the statement by General Dawes, in an after-dinner speech in London, that the difference of opinion between the British and American Governments had

¹ Mr MacDonald, who was afterwards confirmed by Mr Hoover in this statement, later said (in Parliament on the 3rd December) that there would be only one subject on the agenda of the Conference—namely, how best the five Powers could agree upon the reduction and limitation of war vessels on the basis of mutually accepted strength

Japanese claims

now been narrowed down to a minor matter of 30,000 tons (*i.e.* the question as to whether the United States should have 18 or 21 10,000-ton cruisers) out of an aggregate tonnage of 2,400,000 tons, and the communication to the Washington Government by the Japanese Ambassador of his Government's view that the existing ratio of 5-5-3 for capital ships should be altered to 10-10-7 in respect of 10,000-ton cruisers

As regards the last point, the Japanese Government has been careful to make its attitude very clear, and to give its reasons for claiming an increase in the percentage allotted to it at Washington¹. At the end of November it was semi-officially announced in Tokyo that the delegation had received instructions to claim a 70 per cent ratio in "treaty" cruisers² as representing Japan's minimum requirement for defence, and to propose, if possible, that the standard of Anglo-American parity should be lowered. Japan, it was also stated, desired to retain her existing tonnage in submarines³ and opposed their abolition. As regards capital ships, she favoured a reduction in size to a maximum displacement of 25,000 tons, with a maximum gun calibre of 14 inches. She also approved the establishment of the following age limits for capital ships, 25 years, for cruisers, 20 years, for destroyers, 16 years; and for submarines, 13 years.

*Joint
Japanese-
American
statement,
19th Dec.,
1929*

On the 19th December a joint statement was issued in Washington in which it was explained that the discussion with the Secretary of State had been concerned with "the general philosophy underlying naval agreement, and the opportunities of the coming conference. It took up the good results between the United States and Japan of the Washington Conference, and the possibilities of continuing and increasing these results. Agreement on the objectives of both countries was established. Then, in a very frank and friendly way, each delegation presented the broad outlines of its position."

Simultaneously with the appearance of this statement, the leader of the Japanese delegation announced that Japan was prepared to support a proposal for a complete holiday in

¹ At that Conference the Japanese had accepted the 5-5-3 ratio for capital ships in consideration of the agreement to maintain the *status quo* in the Pacific in regard to naval bases. The Japanese now argue, apparently, that this provision is nullified, so far as cruisers are concerned, by the large radius of action of the 10,000 ton type.

² That is, 10,000-ton cruisers armed with 8-inch guns. These vessels are officially termed "light cruisers" in the United States.

³ This amounts to approximately 78,000 tons.

capital ship construction until 1936. He also took up the question as to the possibility of uneasiness being caused in Australia if the 10-10-7 ratio were adopted, owing to the fact that the British Empire was accepting a lower allotment in the 10,000-ton category than the United States, and answered it by saying that if the composition of Japan's whole fleet were taken into account, Australia could have no fear of aggression. He made a further statement on landing in England just after Christmas, when he again referred to his Government's wish to see an actual reduction of naval armaments.

Meanwhile the French and Italian Governments have been *Franco-Italian exchanges* actively engaged in drawing up their programmes and exchanging views as to the respective attitudes they intend to take up *of views* at the Conference table.

Both in communications to the French Government and in the press the views held in Italy as regards the necessity of insisting upon parity with France were repeatedly ventilated, and by the beginning of December the two countries were described as having settled down to a discussion of all the points to be dealt with by the Conference. The objection made by France to conceding parity is understood to be based mainly on the fact that, owing to the need of defending her Colonial Empire and lines of communication outside the Mediterranean, parity with Italy would involve inferiority in that sea, besides her colonies she has, too, a long continental land frontier and a coastal frontier on three seas. By reducing her period of military service, France, it is claimed, has reduced her military strength to a point at which it is insufficient to defeat an invasion from the east unless it is reinforced as quickly as possible by colonial troops, and in this connection it is pointed out that one-third of the French army normally serves in Africa, so that it is a question of bringing home the trained colonial troops and not of transporting to Europe an army of black battalions.

The Italian standpoint is equally clear. That country is dependent for a large proportion of its needs in raw materials and food-stuffs upon sources of supply outside the Mediterranean, and the closing of the narrow approaches to that sea would be extremely serious, so that "even if Italy had a naval superiority in the Mediterranean it would be enough to blockade from outside the approaches to this sea in order to starve the whole Italian population. The situation presents aspects

and problems which no other great naval Power has to face " ¹ Italy's mercantile marine of over three million tons is now nearly as large as that of France, and in case of mobilisation the Navy would have to protect, also, the return home of the hundreds of thousands of Italians who live in North and South America and elsewhere

Statements made in Paris early in December indicated that France would be prepared to accept parity with Italy in the Mediterranean, with a margin for home defence elsewhere and for the defence of her colonies, but there are obvious objections to this from the Italian point of view. The method proposed by the French Government was, therefore, to leave parity as such out of the discussion and to proceed to a full examination of the practical necessities in each case.

*French Note
to Italian
Government,
20th Dec.,
1929*

Later, the suggestion was thrown out, in a Note addressed to the Italian Government on 20th December, that the possibility should be examined of concluding a Mediterranean agreement of mutual guarantee and non-aggression (on the lines of the four-Power Treaty of Washington regarding the Pacific) between the Mediterranean naval Powers, with which those not represented in London would be associated. To this the Italian Government replied expressing its willingness to follow up this proposal, and at the same time reiterated its claim for *de jure* parity with France in all the classes of warships not dealt with by the Washington Conference. It also stated that Italian opinion was now in favour of the abolition of submarines.]

*French
Navy
Estimates
for 1930*

Simultaneously with the communication of its views to the Italian Government, the French Government addressed the Memorandum, mentioned above, to the British Government, but before dealing with this, something must be said of the effect of these discussions on the manner in which the French Navy Estimates were dealt with by Parliament. The existing naval programme, which dates from 1922, provides for the construction of a number of auxiliary vessels extending over twenty years, the programme for the year 1929 including the laying down of one 10,000-ton cruiser (the seventh of the series begun in 1924 with the *Tourville* and *Duquesne*), six destroyers, six submarines and two minelayers. On the 21st November the Naval Committee of the Senate placed on record its opinion that the naval programme was inadequate for the overseas and coastal requirements of the country, and that freedom to

¹ *Popolo d'Italia*, 21st November, 1929.

build for defensive purposes ought not to be abandoned. A week later the Report on the Navy Estimates was issued, and this declared that at the present stage of international negotiations France could not go below the tonnage fixed by her naval programme of 1928, the Estimates for 1930 amounted to 2583 million francs (£20,664,000), or 22 per cent less than those of 1914, France had accepted the invitation to the London Conference, but should maintain the principles of interdependence of armaments, the final decision to be taken at Geneva,¹ refusal to consent to the abolition of submarines, and recognition of the obligations imposed by the defence of her own coasts and of her Colonial Empire ✓

Discussion of the Navy Estimates in the French Chamber revealed the extent of the doubts still felt as to the wisdom of participating in the Conference. On the 18th December M Tardieu assured the Foreign Affairs and Naval Committee of the Chamber that in London France would adhere to the standpoint that naval disarmament could not be settled separately from that of the military and air arms, and that the decisions of the Conference would have to form the basis of the League of Nations Conference on the limitation of all armaments. During the following days the Naval Estimates were debated at length, and the Minister of Marine outlined the Government's policy, reiterating the familiar thesis as to the preliminary character of any agreements concluded in London. He said that France could not agree to any arbitrary standard of measurement of naval strength. Each country had the right to assure its own security—so long as the League of Nations had not assumed the responsibility—with adequate forces, and France would state her needs in the ratio of her Colonial Empire, not arithmetically, but politically. Just after Christmas the naval programme for 1930 was approved by the Senate by 280 votes to 17.

The views outlined above were developed in considerable detail in the Government's Memorandum² to the British

¹ In a speech in London before the United Associations of Great Britain and France some days previous to this, the British Foreign Secretary pointed out that the London Conference had to be held because without agreement as to naval disarmament between the five nations whose navies were more powerful than the rest nothing could be done, and was careful to explain that they were taking nothing out of the hands of the League Preparatory Commission, but were seeking merely to facilitate its work in one part of the task which lay before it.

² See Appendix VI

French
Memoran-
dum to
British
Government,
20th Dec ,
1929

Government, and certain other points made which had not previously been insisted upon. For example, it was pointed out that the French Government would have preferred to base the negotiations not upon the Kellogg Pact, but upon the Covenant of the League, since the application of the Pact had not yet been organised, and it could not, therefore, be looked upon as sufficient to guarantee the security of the signatory nations. For its part the French Government proposed to base the reduction of its armaments upon Article 8 of the Covenant, which did not imply the *à priori* application of mathematical ratios. It also still objected to limitation being effected by classes of ships, but was prepared to accept the compromise it had put forward at Geneva in 1927. French demands in tonnage would be based on the country's needs, and the naval problem should be considered in relation to the guarantees of security necessary for each country concerned. Further, in the French view, a complete naval agreement presupposed an understanding on the problem of the freedom of the seas, defining the rights of belligerents and neutrals separately, and providing for the co-operation of other fleets against that of an aggressor country.

Finally, it was asked whether it would not be possible for the Mediterranean Powers to have a mutual guarantee and non-aggression agreement, including Powers not represented at the Conference, particularly Spain.

Mr Hoover's Message to Congress, 3rd Dec , 1929

In the United States the principal landmark in the preparations for the Conference during the past two months was the pronouncement by the President in his Message to the 71st Congress on the 3rd December. In this he said that the foundations of future peace were being substantially strengthened in various ways. "A great moral standard" had been raised in the world in the shape of the Kellogg Pact, and new efforts had been initiated "not only in the organisation of the machinery of peace, but also to eliminate the dangerous forces which produce controversies among the nations." Of the London Conference he said, "We hold high hopes that success may attend this effort," on which would depend such moderation in naval outlay as could be practised, since if the United States was compelled "to undertake the naval construction implied in the Washington Treaty, as well as other construction which would appear to be necessary if no international agreement can be completed, we shall be committed during the

next six years to a construction expenditure of upwards of \$1,200,000,000 (£240,000,000), besides the necessary further increase in costs for annual upkeep ”

As a matter of fact the Navy Estimates for the year ending *U.S. Navy Estimates, 1930-31* the 30th June, 1931, which had been laid before Congress the previous day, provided for an outlay of the equivalent of £76,078,600, or £3,280,000 more than in the previous year. This sum included provision for carrying forward the work on the two 10,000-ton cruisers laid down last autumn under the Bill of the 13th February, 1929, for three more to be laid down late in the fiscal year 1930, and for the remaining ten to be commenced late in the fiscal year 1931. When the annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy was published a few days later (the 8th December), it was seen that the work of modernising ten of the thirteen pre-Jutland battleships had been nearly completed, while the present plans called for completion, by the 30th June, 1933, of all of the first five of the fifteen 10,000-ton cruisers authorised. As regards the three of the first five which have not yet been laid down, the Report stated that these would not be begun until after the London Conference.

One other indication of the present views of the United States Government, given by Mr Stimson in a published statement, may be noticed. The Secretary of State let it be understood that he believed battleships still to be the “ core ” of the fleet at sea, but he added that the Government would be ready to approve some acceptable method for the reduction of battleship strength, and indicated that the postponement of any replacement in this class until after the Conference of 1936 was an idea which would be favourably regarded.

Of more importance, in view of the attitude taken up by France with regard to the relation of the work of the Conference to that of the League Preparatory Commission, was his statement that what is effected in London should stand as a complete achievement free of merely contingent effectiveness; that is, it must have separate and unconditional validity.

The following are the names of the delegates of the Governments attending the Conference

GREAT BRITAIN

The Right Hon	Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister				
" "	Arthur Henderson, Foreign Secretary				
" "	A V Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty.				
" "	Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India.				
<i>Technical Advisers</i>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles E</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Madden, First Sea Lord</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice-Admiral Sir William W Fisher,</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice-Admiral Roger R Backhouse</td> </tr> </table>	Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles E	Madden, First Sea Lord	Vice-Admiral Sir William W Fisher,	Vice-Admiral Roger R Backhouse
Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles E					
Madden, First Sea Lord					
Vice-Admiral Sir William W Fisher,					
Vice-Admiral Roger R Backhouse					

Australia

Hon J E Fenton, Minister of Customs.

Canada

Hon Colonel J. L. Ralston, Minister of National Defence.			
<i>Technical Advisers</i>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Commodore Hose</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lieut -Col G P Vanier, MC</td> </tr> </table>	Commodore Hose	Lieut -Col G P Vanier, MC
Commodore Hose			
Lieut -Col G P Vanier, MC			

Irish Free State

Mr P McGilligan, Minister for External Affairs,
or Mr Desmond Fitzgerald, Minister for Defence,
or Professor T. A. Smiddy, High Commissioner in London

New Zealand

Mr T. M Wilford, High Commissioner in London.

South Africa

Mr C T te Water, High Commissioner in London

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Hon Henry L Stimson, Secretary of State			
Senator Reed, of Pennsylvania			
Senator Robinson, of Arkansas			
General Charles G Dawes, Ambassador to Great Britain.			
Hon Charles F. Adams, Secretary of the Navy			
Hon Hugh Gibson, Ambassador to Belgium			
Hon. Dwight Morrow, Ambassador to Mexico			
<i>Technical Advisers</i>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Admiral William Pratt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Admiral Hilary Jones</td> </tr> </table>	Admiral William Pratt	Admiral Hilary Jones
Admiral William Pratt			
Admiral Hilary Jones			

FRANCE

M André Tardieu, Prime Minister
M Aristide Briand, Foreign Minister
M G Leygues, Minister of Marine
M Pietri, Minister for Colonies
M. de Fleuriau, Ambassador to Great Britain.

Associate Delegates : { M Massigli
M. Moysset.

ITALY

Signor Grandi, Foreign Minister
Signor Bordonaro, Ambassador to Great Britain
Admiral Sirianni, Minister of Marine
Admiral Acton, Senator.
Technical Adviser Admiral Burzaglio.

JAPAN

Mr. Reijiro Wakatsuki
Admiral Takarabe, Minister of Marine
Mr Matsudaira, Ambassador to Great Britain.
Mr Matsuzo Nagai, Ambassador to Belgium

APPENDICES

I TREATY BETWEEN THE BRITISH EMPIRE, FRANCE, ITALY, JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FOR THE LIMITATION OF NAVAL ARMAMENT, WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 6TH, 1922¹

[Ratifications exchanged at Washington, August 17th, 1923]

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE LIMITATION OF NAVAL ARMAMENT

ARTICLE I The Contracting Powers agree to limit their respective naval armament as provided in the present Treaty

ART II The Contracting Powers may retain respectively the capital ships which are specified in Chapter II, Part 1. On the coming into force of the present Treaty, but subject to the following provisions of this Article, all other capital ships, built or building, of the United States, the British Empire and Japan shall be disposed of as prescribed in Chapter II, Part 2

In addition to the capital ships specified in Chapter II, Part 1, the United States may complete and retain two ships of the "West Virginia" class now under construction. On the completion of these two ships the "North Dakota" and "Delaware" shall be disposed of as prescribed in Chapter II, Part 2

The British Empire may, in accordance with the replacement table in Chapter II, Part 3, construct two new capital ships not exceeding 35,000 tons (35,560 metric tons) standard displacement each. On the completion of the said two ships the "Thunderer," "King George V," "Ajax" and "Centurion" shall be disposed of as prescribed in Chapter II, Part 2

ART III Subject to the provisions of Article II, the Contracting Powers shall abandon their respective capital ship building programmes, and no new capital ships shall be constructed or acquired by any of the Contracting Powers except replacement tonnage which may be constructed or acquired as specified in Chapter II, Part 3

Ships which are replaced in accordance with Chapter II, Part 3, shall be disposed of as prescribed in Part 2 of that Chapter

¹ British White Paper, *Cmd. 2036* of 1924, 6d. The text of the Treaty and the Schedule for Replacement and Scrapping of Capital Ships (Chapter II, Part 3, Section II) is given in full. A digest only is given of Chapter II, Parts 1, 2 and 3, Section I.

ART IV The total capital ship replacement tonnage of each of the Contracting Powers shall not exceed in standard displacement, for the United States, 525,000 tons (533,400 metric tons), for the British Empire, 525,000 tons (533,400 metric tons), for France, 175,000 tons (177,800 metric tons), for Italy, 175,000 tons (177,800 metric tons), for Japan, 315,000 tons (320,040 metric tons)

ART V No capital ship exceeding 35,000 tons (35,560 metric tons) standard displacement shall be acquired by, or constructed by, for, or within the jurisdiction of, any of the Contracting Powers

ART VI No capital ship of any of the Contracting Powers shall carry a gun with a calibre in excess of 16 inches (406 millimetres)

ART VII The total tonnage for aircraft carriers of each of the Contracting Powers shall not exceed in standard displacement, for the United States, 135,000 tons (137,160 metric tons), for the British Empire, 135,000 tons (137,160 metric tons), for France, 60,000 tons (60,960 metric tons), for Italy, 60,000 tons (60,960 metric tons), for Japan, 81,000 tons (82,296 metric tons)

ART VIII The replacement of aircraft carriers shall be effected only as prescribed in Chapter II, Part 3, provided, however, that all aircraft carrier tonnage in existence or building on the 12th November, 1921, shall be considered experimental, and may be replaced, within the total tonnage limit prescribed in Article VII, without regard to its age

ART IX No aircraft carrier exceeding 27,000 tons (27,432 metric tons) standard displacement shall be acquired by, or constructed by, for, or within the jurisdiction of, any of the Contracting Powers

However, any of the Contracting Powers may, provided that its total tonnage allowance of aircraft carriers is not thereby exceeded, build not more than two aircraft carriers, each of a tonnage of not more than 33,000 tons (33,528 metric tons) standard displacement, and in order to effect economy any of the Contracting Powers may use for this purpose any two of their ships, whether constructed or in course of construction, which would otherwise be scrapped under the provisions of Article II. The armament of any aircraft carriers exceeding 27,000 tons (27,432 metric tons) standard displacement shall be in accordance with the requirements of Article X, except that the total number of guns to be carried in case any of such guns be of a calibre exceeding 6 inches (152 millimetres), except anti-aircraft guns and guns not exceeding 5 inches (127 millimetres), shall not exceed eight

ART X No aircraft carrier of any of the Contracting Powers shall carry a gun with a calibre in excess of 8 inches (203 millimetres) Without prejudice to the provisions of Article IX, if the armament carried includes guns exceeding 6 inches (152 millimetres) in calibre the total number of guns carried, except anti-aircraft guns and guns not exceeding 5 inches (127 millimetres), shall not exceed ten. If alternatively the armament contains no guns exceeding 6 inches (152 millimetres) in calibre, the number of guns is not limited. In either case the number of anti-aircraft

guns and of guns not exceeding 5 inches (127 millimetres) is not limited

ART XI. No vessel of war exceeding 10,000 tons (10,160 metric tons) standard displacement, other than capital ship or aircraft carrier, shall be acquired by, or constructed by, for, or within the jurisdiction of, any of the Contracting Powers. Vessels not specifically built as fighting ships nor taken in time of peace under Government control for fighting purposes, which are employed on fleet duties or as troop transports or in some other way for the purpose of assisting in the prosecution of hostilities otherwise than as fighting ships, shall not be within the limitations of this Article.

ART XII. No vessel of war of any of the Contracting Powers, hereafter laid down, other than a capital ship, shall carry a gun with a calibre in excess of 8 inches (203 millimetres).

ART XIII. Except as provided in Article IX, no ship designated in the present Treaty to be scrapped may be reconverted into a vessel of war.

ART. XIV. No preparations shall be made in merchant ships in time of peace for the installation of warlike armaments for the purpose of converting such ships into vessels of war, other than the necessary stiffening of decks for the mounting of guns not exceeding 6-inch (152 millimetres) calibre.

ART XV. No vessel of war constructed within the jurisdiction of any of the Contracting Powers for a non-Contracting Power shall exceed the limitations as to displacement and armament prescribed by the present Treaty for vessels of a similar type which may be constructed by or for any of the Contracting Powers, provided, however, that the displacement for aircraft carriers constructed for a non-Contracting Power shall in no case exceed 27,000 tons (27,432 metric tons) standard displacement.

ART XVI. If the construction of any vessel of war for a non-Contracting Power is undertaken within the jurisdiction of any of the Contracting Powers, such Power shall promptly inform the other Contracting Powers of the date of the signing of the contract and the date on which the keel of the ship is laid, and shall also communicate to them the particulars relating to the ship prescribed in Chapter II, Part 3, Section I (b), (4) and (5).

ART XVII. In the event of a Contracting Power being engaged in war, such Power shall not use as a vessel of war any vessel of war which may be under construction within its jurisdiction for any other Power, or which may have been constructed within its jurisdiction for another Power and not delivered.

ART XVIII. Each of the Contracting Powers undertakes not to dispose by gift, sale or any mode of transfer of any vessel of war in such a manner that such vessel may become a vessel of war in the Navy of any foreign Power.

ART XIX. The United States, the British Empire and Japan agree that the *status quo* at the time of the signing of the present Treaty, with regard to fortifications and naval bases, shall be maintained in their respective territories and possessions specified hereunder.—

1 The insular possessions which the United States now holds or may hereafter acquire in the Pacific Ocean, except (a) those adjacent to the coast of the United States, Alaska and the Panama Canal Zone, not including the Aleutian Islands, and (b) the Hawaiian Islands,

2 Hong Kong and the insular possessions which the British Empire now holds or may hereafter acquire in the Pacific Ocean, east of the meridian of 110° east longitude, except (a) those adjacent to the coast of Canada, (b) the Commonwealth of Australia and its territories, and (c) New Zealand,

3 The following insular territories and possessions of Japan in the Pacific Ocean, to wit the Kurile Islands, the Bonin Islands, Amami-Oshima, the Loochoo Islands, Formosa and the Pescadores, and any insular territories or possessions in the Pacific Ocean which Japan may hereafter acquire

The maintenance of the *status quo* under the foregoing provisions implies that no new fortifications or naval bases shall be established in the territories and possessions specified, that no measures shall be taken to increase the existing naval facilities for the repair and maintenance of naval forces, and that no increase shall be made in the coast defences of the territories and possessions above specified. This restriction, however, does not preclude such repair and replacement of worn-out weapons and equipment as is customary in naval and military establishments in time of peace

ART XX. The rules for determining tonnage displacement prescribed in Chapter II, Part 4, shall apply to the ships of each of the Contracting Powers

CHAPTER II

RULES RELATING TO THE EXECUTION OF THE TREATY—DEFINITION OF TERMS

PART I—CAPITAL SHIPS WHICH MAY BE RETAINED BY THE CONTRACTING POWERS

In accordance with Article II ships may be retained by each of the Contracting Powers as specified in this Part

Ships which may be retained by the United States

Maryland (32,600 tons), California (32,300), Tennessee (32,300), Idaho (32,000), New Mexico (32,000), Mississippi (32,000), Arizona (31,400), Pennsylvania (31,400), Oklahoma (27,500), Nevada (27,500) New York (27,000), Texas (27,000), Arkansas (26,000), Wyoming (26,000), Florida (21,825), Utah (21,825), North Dakota (20,000), Delaware (20,000)

Total tonnage, 500,650

On the completion of the two ships of the "West Virginia" class and the scrapping of the "North Dakota" and "Delaware," as provided in Article II, the total tonnage to be retained by the United States will be 525,850 tons

Ships which may be retained by the British Empire

Royal Sovereign (25,750 tons), Royal Oak (25,750), Revenge (25,750), Resolution (25,750), Ramillies (25,750), Malaya (27,500), Valiant (27,500), Balaclava (27,500), Queen Elizabeth (27,500), Warspite (27,500), Benbow (25,000), Emperor of India (25,000), Iron Duke (25,000), Marlborough (25,000), Hood (41,200), Renown (26,500), Repulse (26,500), Tiger (28,500), Thunderer (22,500), King George V (23,000), Ajax (23,000), Centurion (23,000)

Total tonnage, 580,450

On the completion of the two new ships to be constructed and the scrapping of the "Thunderer," "King George V," "Ajax" and "Centurion," as provided in Article II, the total tonnage to be retained by the British Empire will be 558,950 tons

Ships which may be retained by Japan

Mutsu (33,800 tons), Nagato (33,800), Hiuga (31,260), Ise (31,260), Yamashiro (30,600), Fu-So (30,600), Kirishima (27,500), Haruna (27,500), Hiyoshi (27,500), Kongo (27,500)

Total tonnage, 301,320

Ships which may be retained by France

Ten ships total tonnage, 221,170

France may lay down new tonnage in the years 1927, 1929, and 1931, as provided in Part 3, Section II

Ships which may be retained by Italy

Ten ships total tonnage, 182,800

Italy may lay down new tonnage in the years 1927, 1929 and 1931, as provided in Part 3, Section II.

Part 2 contains the rules to be observed for the scrapping of vessels which were to be disposed of in accordance with Articles II and III.

Part 3 deals with replacement. Capital ships and aircraft carriers might be replaced twenty years after their completion, within the limits of Articles IV and VII. It also provides for the communication by each of the contracting Powers to the others of information regarding the names of the capital ships to be replaced by new construction, the date of authorisation of replacement tonnage, the date of laying the keels, the standard displacement and principal dimensions, and the date of completion of all displacement tonnage.

PART 3, SECTION II — *Replacement and Scrapping of Capital Ships*

UNITED STATES

Year	Ships laid down	Ships completed	Ships scrapped (age in parentheses)	Ships retained Summary	
				Pre Jutland	Post-Jutland
			Maine (20), Missouri (20), Virginia (17), Nebraska (17), Georgia (17), New Jersey (17), Rhode Island (17), Connecticut (17), Louisiana (17), Vermont (16), Kansas (16), Minnesota (16), New Hampshire (15), South Carolina (13), Michigan (13), Washington (0), South Dakota (0), Indiana (0), Montana (0), North Carolina (0), Iowa (0), Massachusetts (0), Lexington (0), Constitution (0), Constellation (0), Saratoga (0), Ranger (0), United States (0)*	17	1
1922	.	A, B †	Delaware (12), North Dakota (12)	15	3
1923	.			15	3
1924				15	3
1925				15	3
1926				15	3
1927				15	3
1928	...	...		15	3
1929	.	...		15	3
1930				15	3
1931	C, D			15	3
1932	E, F			15	3
1933	G			15	3
1934	H, I	C, D	Florida (23), Utah (23), Wyoming (22)	12	5
1935	J	E, F	Arkansas (23), Texas (21), New York (21)	9	7
1936	K, L	G	Nevada (20), Oklahoma (20)	7	8
1937	M	H, I	Arizona (21), Pennsylvania (21)	5	10
1938	N, O	J	Mississippi (21)	4	11
1939	P, Q	K, L	New Mexico (21), Idaho (20)	2	13
1940		M	Tennessee (20)	1	14
1941	N, O		California (20), Maryland (20)	0	15
1942	P, Q		2 ships West Virginia class	0	15

* The United States may retain the "Oregon" and "Illinois," for non combatant purposes, after complying with the provisions of Part 2, III (b)

† Two "West Virginia" class

NOTE — A, B, C, D, etc., represent individual capital ships of 35,000 tons standard displacement, laid down and completed in the years specified

BRITISH EMPIRE.

Year	Ships laid down	Ships completed	Ships scrapped (age in parentheses)	Ships retained Summary	
				Pre-Jutland	Post-Jutland
			Commonwealth (16), Agamemnon (13), Dreadnought (15), Bellerophon (12), St Vincent (11), Inflexible (13), Superb (12), Neptune (10), Hercules (10), Indomitable (13), Temeraire (12), New Zealand (9), Lion (9), Princess Royal (9), Conqueror (9), Monarch (9), Orion (9), Australia (8), Agincourt (7), Elsin (7), 4 building or projected *	21	1
1922	A, B †			21	1
1923	.			21	1
1924	.			21	1
1925		A, B	King George V (13), Ajax (12), Centurion (12), Thunderer (13)	17	3
1926			.	17	3
1927				17	3
1928		.		17	3
1929	.	.	.	17	3
1930		.	.	17	3
1931	C, D		.	17	3
1932	E, F			17	3
1933	G			17	3
1934	H, I	C, D	Iron Duke (20), Marlborough (20), Emperor of India (20), Benbow (20)	13	5
1935	J	E, F	Tiger (21), Queen Elizabeth (20), Warspite (20), Barham (20)	9	7
1936	K, L	G	Malaya (20), Royal Sovereign (20)	7	8
1937	M	H, I	Revenge (21), Resolution (21)	5	10
1938	N, O	J	Royal Oak (22)	4	11
1939	P, Q	K, L	Valiant (23), Repulse (23)	2	13
1940		M	Renown (24)	1	14
1941	N, O		Ramillies (24), Hood (21)	0	15
1942	P, Q		A (17), B (17)	0	15

* The British Empire may retain the "Colossus" and "Collingwood" for non-combatant purposes after complying with the provisions of Part 2, III (b).

† Two 35,000-ton ships, standard displacement

Note.—A, B, C, D, etc., represent individual capital ships of 35,000 tons standard displacement laid down and completed in the years specified

FRANCE.

Year	Ships laid down	Ships com- pleted	Ships scrapped (age in parentheses).	Ships retained Summary	
				Pro- Jutland	Post- Jutland
1922	Tons	Tons		7	0
1923				7	0
1924				7	0
1925				7	0
1926				7	0
1927	35,000			7	0
1928				7	0
1929	35,000			7	0
1930		35,000	Joan Bart (17), Courbot (17)	5	*
1931	35,000			5	*
1932	35,000	35,000	France (18)	4	*
1933	35,000			4	*
1934		35,000	Paris (20), Bretagne (20)	2	*
1935		35,000	Provence (20)	1	*
1936		35,000	Lorraine (20)	0	*
1937				0	*
1938				0	*
1939				0	*
1940				0	*
1941				0	*
1942				0	*

NOTE.—France expressly reserves the right of employing the capital ship tonnage allotment as she may consider advisable, subject solely to the limitations that the displacement of individual ships should not surpass 35,000 tons, and that the total capital ship tonnage should keep within the limits imposed by the present treaty.

ITALY

Year	Ships laid down	Ships com- pleted	Ships scrapped (age in parentheses)	Ships retained Summary.	
				Pre- Jutland	Post- Jutland
1922	Tons	Tons		6	0
1923				6	0
1924				6	0
1925				6	0
1926				6	0
1927	35,000			6	0
1928				6	0
1929	35,000			6	0
1930				6	0
1931	35,000	35,000	Dante Alighieri (19)	5	*
1932	45,000			5	*
1933	25,000	35,000	Leonardo da Vinci (19)	4	*
1934		35,000		4	*
1935		35,000	Giulio Cesare (21)	3	*
1936		45,000	Conte di Cavour (21), Dante (21)	1	*
1937		25,000	Andrea Doria (21)	0	*

NOTE.—Italy expressly reserves the right of employing the capital ship tonnage allotment as she may consider advisable, subject solely to the limitations that the displacement of individual ships should not surpass 35,000 tons, and that the total capital ship tonnage should keep within the limits imposed by the present treaty.

JAPAN

Year.	Ships laid down.	Ships completed	Ships scrapped (age in parentheses)	Ships retained Summary	
				Pre-Jutland	Post-Jutland
			Hizen (20), Mikasa (20), Kashima (16), Katori (16), Satsuma (12), Aki (11), Settsu (10), Ikoma (14), Ibuki (12), Kurama (11), Amagi (0), Akagi (0), Kaga (0), Tosa (0), Takao (0), Atago (0) Projected programme 8 ships not laid down *	8	2
1922	.	.	.	8	2
1923	.	.	..	8	2
1924	.	.	..	8	2
1925	.	.	..	8	2
1926	.	.	..	8	2
1927	.	.	..	8	2
1928	.	.	..	8	2
1929	.	.	..	8	2
1930	.	.	..	8	2
1931	A	.	.	8	2
1932	B	.	.	8	2
1933	C	.	.	8	2
1934	D	A	Kongo (21)	7	3
1935	E	B	Hiyei (21), Haruna (20)	5	4
1936	F	C	Kirishima (21)	4	5
1937	G	D	Fuso (22)	3	6
1938	H	E	Yamashiro (21)	2	7
1939	I	F	Ise (22)	1	8
1940	.	G	Huuga (22)	0	9
1941	.	H	Nagato (21)	0	9
1942	.	I	Mutsu (21)	0	9

* Japan may retain the "Shikishima" and "Asahi" for non-combatant purposes, after complying with the provisions of Part 2, III (b)

NOTE—A, B, C, D, etc., represent individual capital ships of 35,000 tons standard displacement, laid down and completed in the years specified

Note applicable to all the Tables in Section II

The order above prescribed in which ships are to be scrapped is in accordance with their age. It is understood that when replacement begins according to the above tables the order of scrapping in the case of the ships of each of the Contracting Powers may be varied at its option, provided, however, that such Power shall scrap in each year the number of ships above stated

PART 4—DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of the present Treaty, the following expressions are to be understood in the sense defined in this Part.

Capital Ship.

A capital ship, in the case of ships hereafter built, is defined as a vessel of war, not an aircraft carrier, whose displacement exceeds 10,000 tons (10,160 metric tons) standard displacement, or which carries a gun with a calibre exceeding 8 inches (203 millimetres)

Aircraft Carrier

An aircraft carrier is defined as a vessel of war with a displacement in excess of 10,000 tons (10,160 metric tons) standard displacement designed for the specific and exclusive purpose of carrying aircraft. It must be so constructed that aircraft can be launched therefrom and landed thereon, and not designed and constructed for carrying a more powerful armament than that allowed to it under Article IX or Article X as the case may be

Standard Displacement

The standard displacement of a ship is the displacement of the ship complete, fully manned, engined, and equipped ready for sea, including all armament and ammunition, equipment, outfit, provisions and fresh water for crew, miscellaneous stores and implements of every description that are intended to be carried in war, but without fuel or reserve feed water on board

The word "ton" in the present Treaty, except in the expression "metric tons," shall be understood to mean the ton of 2,240 pounds (1,016 kilog.)

Vessels now completed shall retain their present ratings of displacement tonnage in accordance with their national system of measurement. However, a Power expressing displacement in metric tons shall be considered for the application of the present Treaty as owning only the equivalent displacement in tons of 2,240 pounds

A vessel completed hereafter shall be rated at its displacement tonnage when in the standard condition defined therein.

CHAPTER III

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

ARTICLE XXI If during the term of the present Treaty the requirements of the national security of any Contracting Power in respect of naval defence are, in the opinion of that Power, materially affected by any change of circumstances, the Contracting Powers will, at the request of such Power, meet in conference with a view to the reconsideration of the provisions of the Treaty and its amendment by mutual agreement

In view of possible technical and scientific developments, the United States, after consultation with the other Contracting Powers, shall arrange for a conference of all the Contracting Powers which shall convene as soon as possible after the expiration of eight years from the coming into force of the present Treaty to consider what

changes, if any, in the Treaty may be necessary to meet such developments

ART. XXII Whenever any Contracting Power shall become engaged in a war which in its opinion affects the naval defence of its national security, such Power may after notice to the other Contracting Powers suspend for the period of hostilities its obligations under the present Treaty other than those under Articles XIII and XVII, provided that such Power shall notify the other Contracting Powers that the emergency is of such a character as to require such suspension

The remaining Contracting Powers shall in such case consult together with a view to agreement as to what temporary modifications, if any, should be made in the Treaty as between themselves. Should such consultation not produce agreement, duly made in accordance with the constitutional methods of the respective Powers, any one of said Contracting Powers may, by giving notice to the other Contracting Powers, suspend for the period of hostilities its obligations under the present Treaty, other than those under Articles XIII and XVII.

On the cessation of hostilities the Contracting Powers will meet in conference to consider what modifications, if any, should be made in the provisions of the present Treaty.

II FRENCH COMPROMISE PROPOSAL ON THE DRAFT CONVENTION DRAWN UP BY THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION AT ITS THIRD SESSION, MARCH 21-APRIL 26, 1927¹

ART. XI OF FRENCH DRAFT

THE limitation of naval armaments agreed to by each of the High Contracting Parties is shown in the annexed Table X

The figures in Column I of this table represent the total tonnage that each of the High Contracting Parties considers it essential to attain for the purposes of security and the defence of its national interests

The figures in Column II represent the total tonnage that each of the High Contracting Parties considers it necessary to complete before the expiry of the Convention

The figures in Column III represent, for each of the High Contracting Parties, the division of the total tonnage stated by it in Column II into total tonnage by groups

These total tonnage groups apply to all ships of a similar nature in the following manner (a) capital ships, (b) aircraft carriers, (c) surface ships of less than 10,000 tons, (d) submarines.

Each of the High Contracting Parties, while keeping within the limits of total tonnage stated in Column II, can alter such division as it deems necessary for its security, subject to informing the

¹ British White Paper, *Cmd 2888* of 1927, p 33

Secretariat of the League of Nations of the changes brought to the division of its total tonnage, at least one year before laying down the portion of the tonnage which is to be transferred

NOTE.—Each of the High Contracting Parties states in Column III the division of its total tonnage, either into the four groups of vessels as stated in paragraph 4, or only into those groups which it considers necessary for its needs of security

TABLE X
Total Tonnage of Warships

I Tonnage essential for the purposes of security and the defence of national interests.	II Tonnage to be completed before the expiry of the Convention	III. Division into total tonnage by groups of the total tonnage stated in Column II			
		Total tonnage of			
Capital ships	Aircraft carriers	Vessels under 10,000 tons	Submarines		
<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>		

III SPEECH BY THE RT HON W C BRIDGEMAN, M.P.,
AT THE FIRST PLENARY SESSION OF THE THREE
POWER CONFERENCE, GENEVA, JUNE 20TH, 1927¹

MR PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN I count it a great privilege to take part in this Conference as one of the British delegates, and I desire first of all to thank, on behalf of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, the President of the United States for sending out the invitation, the Swiss Confederation for their hospitality, and the League of Nations for their great kindness in accommodating us so comfortably at Geneva, and all their help in arranging the meeting

It was an invitation which we could readily accept It so happened that a few days before President Coolidge's invitation was sent, I had put before my Prime Minister certain proposals on which the Admiralty had been at work for some months, with a request that steps might be taken to ascertain whether a Conference could

¹ British White Paper, *Cmd 2964* of 1927, 6d.

be summoned for their consideration by the Powers which participated in the Washington Conference

Such steps became unnecessary on the receipt a few days later of the President's invitation and his intimation that the scope of the Conference would not merely be confined to the discussion of the ratio

It is a matter of deep regret to His Majesty's Government that France and Italy have not found themselves able to take a full part. But it is my earnest hope that any agreement which may be reached in this Conference will be of such a nature as to make it easier for them to consider adherence at no very distant date.

We are fortunate in meeting at a time when relations between the three Powers represented here, and the other Powers invited, are of such a friendly character, and when we remember, as Mr Gibson has reminded us, that each of us has loyally carried out the Agreement arrived at in Washington.

The great achievements of the Washington Conference of 1921 are not perhaps so generally realised as they deserve to be. Let me recall the situation as it existed before that Conference, little more than six years ago.

Already designs were in contemplation for huge battleships of 45,000 tons displacement armed with 18 or 20-inch guns, while the number of such vessels was only limited by the willingness and capacity of any Nation to pay for their construction and maintenance. Each Nation was watching another and the danger of a recommencement of ruinous competition was imminent.

The Conference held at Washington put an end to this tendency—a great attainment in itself. But it did more. It proved the possibility of limiting by agreement the scale of armaments to be maintained.

We feel that the time is ripe for a further extension of this principle, and I am authorised to put before you proposals which will mark a further step in the progressive decrease of armaments and, while maintaining the respective security of our several Nations at sea, will reduce the standard of Naval armament.

I am quite convinced that we are all animated by a strong desire to reach agreement, and a readiness to appreciate the special conditions which differentiate our respective positions. And I think our deliberations are more likely to reach a successful conclusion if each country adopts an attitude of complete frankness in stating what Naval force they want and why they want it. I am assuming that none of the Countries represented here to-day, and Mr Gibson has assumed the same, requires a Navy for aggressive purposes, and that we have come together to consider what we require respectively for the defence of our existing interests, and are prepared with arguments in support of those requirements based purely on defensive considerations.

And so I will begin by an attempt to make clear what are the considerations which govern the position of Great Britain and the British Empire.

In doing so I shall not be revealing any secrets hitherto unknown.

Indeed, I am more likely to be accused of repeating well-worn platitudes

Nevertheless, I will, for the sake of clearing the ground for discussion, put the following facts before you, fully realising that for other countries other considerations deserve the special attention of the Conference

First and foremost there is the insular position of the Mother Country, which I represent, and the fact that she is almost entirely dependent not only for raw material, but also for her food supplies and her very existence upon free passage upon the seas. It is no exaggeration to say that if the seas were closed to ships trading with our country, we should be faced with starvation within a few weeks. My countrymen would never consent to take any risk of such a catastrophe. This obvious fact places us in a position totally different from that of any other country in the world, and makes discussion on Naval disarmament, I think, more difficult for us than any other Power.

The other important factors in our case are the immense lengths of the routes over which our trade is carried, and the very large coast lines which bound the various parts of the Empire, and the necessity of providing reasonable protection for these extensive shores and long lines of communication against any aggression, however unlikely such a menace may appear at the moment to be.

In this second consideration, more closely than the first, the welfare of the outlying parts of the Empire is very deeply concerned. Our situation is very plain, but its very simplicity is a measure of its vital seriousness to us. At the same time we feel that there are limitations in Naval Armament, beyond those which have been accepted in the Washington Conference, to which we could safely agree if the other Powers found themselves able to consent.

I have listened with very great interest to the statement made by the Chairman, and with a very large measure of agreement with the principles which underlay it, but I think he will agree with me, and I hope that Viscount Saito, too, will agree with me, that to-day it will perhaps be better to confine ourselves to our own aspect of the question, and not to discuss the proposals which other countries have made. I think we shall be able to discuss them more fairly and more satisfactorily after we have had a little more time to think them over, and therefore, rather than discussing the proposals which he has made, I should like to lay before you the proposals which I am authorised to make on behalf of the British Government.

I shall do it as briefly as I can, and without entering into details which can be left for examination and explanation later. The main proposals which we have to make are

(1) The extension of the accepted life of existing Capital Ships from 20 to 26 years and a consequent waiver by the three Powers of their full rights under the replacement tables agreed upon at Washington. Such an arrangement would naturally have to provide for some little elasticity on each side of that figure.

(2) The fixing of the life of other vessels—

- (a) 8-inch gun Cruisers at 24 years,
- (b) Destroyers at 20 years,
- (c) Submarines at 15 years

(3) The reduction in the size of any Battleships to be built in the future from the present limit of 35,000 tons displacement to something under 30,000 tons

(4) Reduction in the size of guns in Battleships from the present limit of 16-inch to 13 5-inch

(5) Limitation of the displacement of Aircraft Carriers to 25,000 tons instead of the present limit of 27,000 tons

(6) Reduction of guns on Aircraft Carriers from 8-inch to 6-inch

(7) Acceptance of the existing ratio 5 5 3 for Cruisers of 10,000 tons displacement carrying 8-inch guns

The number of these larger cruisers which each of the three countries require can be the subject of further discussion

(8) A limitation of 7,500 tons and 6-inch guns to be placed on all future Cruisers after the number of 10,000-ton Cruisers has been decided upon

(9) Limitation of displacement of—

- (a) Destroyer Leaders to 1,750 tons.
- (b) Destroyers to 1,400 tons

(10) Guns in Destroyers to be limited to 5-inch

(11) With regard to Submarines, we have not changed our mind since the Washington Conference, when our delegates expressed their willingness to agree to the discontinuation of the use of submarines in warfare. But we recognise that Powers which possess fewer of the larger vessels of war regard the possession of submarines as a valuable weapon of defence

At the same time we feel that if the proposals we have put forward for limitation of Battleships and other more powerful vessels of war should be accepted, it would not be unreasonable to suggest some limitation in the size, and perhaps also in the number of submarines

We therefore propose that the tonnage of the larger type of submarine be limited to 1,600, and of the smaller type to 600, and the armament of each to 5-inch guns. We also think it would be desirable to discuss the possibility of limiting the number of submarines according to our varying requirements. And it must be borne in mind that any limit placed on the number of submarines would make it easier to limit the number of Destroyers, and if agreement were reached on these points with other Powers, it might be possible also to consider the numbers of cruisers each of us should possess.

It will be noted that we have not made any definite proposals with regard to miscellaneous vessels such as Minclayers, small Aircraft Carriers, Torpedo Boats, Minesweepers, Fleet Auxiliaries and purely Local Defence Vessels. We have, however, prepared a comprehensive classification table which includes all types of vessels with suggestions for the limitation of their tonnage and armament.

designed solely with a view to preventing their development in such a way as to jeopardise the security arising out of any agreement we may reach in regard to the more important types of vessels

Finally, I wish to make it clear that in making the above proposals for disarmament, I am speaking with the consent of my colleagues here who represent the Dominions, and that these proposals are put forward on behalf of all the Governments of His Britannic Majesty whose plenipotentiaries are here to-day

I may perhaps add that my colleagues and I are, under the terms of our full powers, appointed respectively for the particular part of the British Empire named in the full power, but all of us are appointed as representatives of His Majesty the King

As regards the form of the Treaty which may result, as I hope, from the deliberations of this Conference, it is our desire, in accordance with the resolutions of the Imperial Conference which met last year and the statement made by Sir Austen Chamberlain at the March meeting of the Council of the League of Nations, that such Treaty should be made in the name of Heads of States, the participation of the several parts of the British Empire being shown by appropriate geographical entries in the list of plenipotentiaries

It seems hardly necessary for me to dwell at length on the advantages of the measures we bring forward

In the earlier items the extension of the life of vessels, and the reduction in their tonnage and armament in the future, will obviously reduce very considerably the cost of replacement for us all

The limitation of the size in the various classes of warships will prevent a reversion to that competition which was exemplified in the continual increase in the size of Battleships and which led from Dreadnoughts to Super-Dreadnoughts, and opened an endless prospect of increased expenditure as each country attempted to equal or to excel the latest vessel designed by another Power. As I have already said, this competition in large vessels was brought to an end in 1921. It remains for us to try to put an end to it in respect of smaller vessels

If increases in the size of even small vessels in any country once begin, they must have an effect not only on the vessels of that type in other countries, but also on the size, armour and cost of the larger vessels which may be exposed to their attack

The object, therefore, at which we aim is to secure economy in the replacement of ships as they become obsolete, and to eliminate the danger of rivalry in new vessels by stabilising their size and armament

There is, however, one reservation which I must make in offering these suggestions for your consideration

If agreement can be reached between the United States of America, Japan and ourselves, the British Empire must by virtue of the position of Great Britain in relation to Europe be liable to a danger which does not affect the other two countries. That is the danger—that some other Power or Powers, not signatories to this Agreement, might embark upon such an increase in their Naval Strength as would imperil our safety

The agreement would consequently, in order to safeguard our position, have to provide for a reconsideration of our strength if any other Power or Powers were known to be initiating an extensive shipbuilding programme

That, I think, is more or less in correspondence with the statement which Mr Gibson made in his opening remarks

But this danger would undoubtedly be very much reduced if, as I most earnestly hope, it may be possible for European Powers to give their adherence to our agreement. Such adherence would perhaps also make it possible for us to go more fully into the consideration of numbers in other categories than it is at present

It has been my endeavour so to frame our scheme as to make it easier and not harder for France and Italy to join us, as the success of our plan depends not so much on any hard-and-fast ratio, as upon a straightforward declaration of the requirements of the Countries who participate in it

I have tried to put our case briefly under the impression that the more we confine ourselves to facts and plain language and the less we rely upon rhetoric, the better is the chance of our understanding and agreeing with one another

I trust, however, that, if my statement has been somewhat blunt, I may give you the assurance that my countrymen and their representatives here feel very deeply the need for some further agreement, and hope most fervently that what I have said may lead to a result which will be satisfactory to the Conference and to the World

IV THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION TO THE LONDON NAVAL CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 7TH, 1929

THE invitation of the British Government to the United States, France, Italy and Japan to take part in the naval conference in London was communicated to the Embassies of those countries in London on October 7th

Mr Henderson also wrote a covering Note to General Dawes, enclosing copies of the identical Notes which he had addressed to the French, Italian and Japanese Ambassadors, and adding that he understood that the Government of the United States concurred in the terms of the Notes

The following is the text of the Note addressed to the French Ambassador

“ I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the informal conversations on the subject of naval disarmament which have been proceeding in London during the last three months between the Prime Minister and the Ambassador of the United States, have now reached a stage at which it is possible to say that there is no point outstanding of such serious importance as to prevent an agreement

From time to time the Prime Minister has notified Your Excellency of the progress made in these discussions, and I now have the honour to state that provisional and informal agreement has been reached on the following principles —

1 The conversations have been one of the results of the Treaty for the Renunciation of War signed at Paris in 1928, which brought about a realignment of our national attitudes on the subject of security, in consequence of the provision that war should not be used as an instrument of national policy in the relations of nations one to another. Therefore, the Peace Pact has been regarded as the starting point of agreement.

2 It has been agreed to adopt the principle of parity in each of the several categories and that such parity shall be reached by December 31, 1936. Consultation between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and His Majesty's Governments in the Dominions has taken place, and it is contemplated that the programme of parity on the British side should be related to the naval forces of all parts of the Empire.

3. The question of battleship strength was also touched upon during the conversations, and it has been agreed in these conversations that subject to the assent of other signatory Powers it would be desirable to reconsider the battleship replacement programmes provided for in the Washington Treaty of 1922, with the view to diminishing the amount of replacement construction implied under that Treaty.

4 Since both the Governments of the United States and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom adhere to the attitude that they have publicly adopted in regard to the desirability of securing the total abolition of the submarine, this matter hardly gave rise to discussion during the recent conversations. They recognise, however, that no final settlement on this subject can be reached except in conference with the other naval Powers.

In view of the scope of these discussions both Governments consider it most desirable that a conference should be summoned to consider the categories not covered by the Washington Treaty, and to arrange for and deal with the questions covered by the second paragraph of Article 21 of that Treaty. It is our earnest hope that the French Government will agree to the desirability of such a conference. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States are in accord that such a conference should be held in London at the beginning of the third week of January, 1930, and it is hoped that the French Government will be willing to appoint representatives to attend it.

A similar invitation is being addressed to the Governments of Italy, Japan and the United States, and His Majesty's Governments in the Dominions are being asked to appoint representatives to take part in the conference. I should be grateful if your Excellency would cause the above invitation to be addressed to the French Government.

In the same way as the two Governments have kept your Excellency informally *au courant* of the recent discussions, so now His Majesty's Government will be willing, in the interval before the proposed conference, to continue informal conversations with your Excellency on any points which may require elucidation. The importance of reviewing the whole naval situation at an early date is so vital in the interests of general disarmament that I trust that your Excellency's Government will see their way to accept this invitation and that the date proposed will be agreeable to them. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom propose to communicate to you in due course their views as to the subjects which they think should be discussed at the conference, and will be glad to receive a corresponding communication from the French Government.

It is hoped that at this conference the principal naval Powers may be successful in reaching agreement. I should like to emphasise that His Majesty's Government have discovered no inclination in any quarter to set up new machinery for dealing with the naval disarmament question, on the contrary, it is hoped that by this means a text can be elaborated which will facilitate the task of the League of Nations Preparatory Commission and of the subsequent General Disarmament Conference."

V JOINT STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT HOOVER AND MR MACDONALD, OCTOBER 9TH, 1929

THE following statement was issued simultaneously at the British Embassy and at the White House for publication on October 9th

"The visit of the British Premier to Mr Hoover, which has now terminated, had as its chief purpose the making of personal contacts which will be fruitful in promoting friendly, frank relations between the two countries.

"Both the President and the Prime Minister are highly gratified by the keen interest which the people of both countries have taken in their meeting and regard it as a proof of the strong desire of both nations to come to a closer understanding. The British Prime Minister has been particularly impressed and gratified by the warmth of his welcome and by the flood of expressions of goodwill which have been poured upon him.

"At the moment of his leaving Washington the following joint statement is issued

"During the last few days we have had an opportunity in the informal talks in which we have been engaged not only to review the conversations on naval agreement which have been carried on during this summer between us but also to discuss

some of the more important means by which the moral force of our countries can be exerted for peace.

“ We have been guided by the double hope of settling our own differences on naval matters and so establishing unclouded goodwill, candour and confidence between us and also of contributing something to the solution of the problem of peace in which all other nations are interested and which calls for their co-operation

“ In signing the Paris Peace Pact fifty-six nations have declared that war shall not be used as an instrument of national policy. We have agreed that all disputes shall be settled by pacific means. Both our Governments resolve to accept the Peace Pact not only as a declaration of our good intentions but as a positive obligation to direct our national policy in accordance with its pledge

“ The part of each of our Governments in the promotion of world peace will be different, as one will never consent to become entangled in European diplomacy and the other is resolved to pursue a policy of active co-operation with its European neighbours, but each of our Governments will direct its thoughts and influence towards securing and maintaining the peace of the world

“ Our conversations have been largely confined to the mutual relations of the two countries in the light of the situation created by the signing of the Peace Pact. Therefore in a new and reinforced sense the two Governments not only declare that war between them is unthinkable but that distrusts and suspicions arising from doubts and fears which may have been justified before the Peace Pact must now cease to influence our national policy

“ We approach the old historical problems from a new angle and in a new atmosphere. On the assumption that war between us has been banished and that conflicts between our military or naval forces cannot take place these problems have changed their meaning and character, and their solution in ways satisfactory to both countries has become possible

“ We have agreed that those questions should become the subject of active consideration between us. They involve important technical matters requiring detailed study. One of the hopeful results of the visit which is now terminating officially has been that our two Governments will begin conversations upon them, following the same method as that which has been pursued during the summer in London

“ The exchange of views on naval reduction has brought the two nations so close to agreement that the obstacles in previous conferences arising out of Anglo-American disagreements seem now to be substantially removed. We have kept the nations which took part in the Washington Naval Conference in 1922 informed of the progress of our conversations and we have now proposed to them that we should meet together and try to come to a common agreement which would

justify each in making substantial naval reductions. An agreement on naval armaments cannot be completed without the co-operation of the other naval Powers, and both of us feel sure that by the same free and candid discussion of needs which has characterised our conversations such mutual understandings will be reached as will make naval agreement next January possible and thus remove this serious obstacle to the progress of world disarmament.

"Between now and the meeting of the proposed conference in January our Governments will continue their conversations with the other Powers concerned in order to remove as many difficulties as possible before the official formal negotiations open. In view of the security afforded by the Peace Pact we have been able to end, we trust for ever, all competitive building between ourselves, with the risk of war and the waste of public money involved, by agreeing to a parity of our fleets, category by category.

"Success at the coming conference will result in a large decrease in the naval equipment of the world and, what is equally important, the reduction of prospective programmes of construction which would otherwise produce competitive building to an indefinite amount. We hope and believe that the steps we have taken will be warmly welcomed by the people whom we represent as a substantial contribution to the efforts universally made by all the nations to gain security for peace—not by military organisation—but by peaceful means rooted in public opinion and enforced by a sense of justice in the civilised world."

VI THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S MEMORANDUM ON NAVAL DISARMAMENT, COMMUNICATED TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON DECEMBER 20TH, 1929¹

When accepting, on October 16th last, the invitation of the British Government to take part in the Naval Conference in London, the French Government reserved its liberty to define its views with regard to the problems to be included in the agenda and other matters that may come up for discussion at that international meeting. After the exchange of views that has already taken place, the French Government believes that the time has come to explain its position in respect of the more vital questions of principle and detail that will arise during the negotiations, and the importance of which, as overstepping purely technical limits, requires to be fully brought to light.

¹ *The Times*, 27th Dec., 1929

I

The French Government has already had the opportunity to express its appreciation of the considerations underlying the step taken by the British Government in conjunction with the Government of the United States. It is well aware of the vital character of the task of limiting armaments, and it has taken too active a part in the work hitherto done in this direction not to welcome a suggestion tending, as expressly stated by his Excellency Mr Arthur Henderson in his letter of October 7th, to facilitate the task of the Preparatory Commission of the League of Nations, and, later, of the work of the General Conference on Disarmament.

Moreover, the problem of naval disarmament must be considered, since the meeting in April and May last of the Preparatory Commission at Geneva, as holding up the work carried on by that Commission, which had the efficient co-operation of the American delegates. Furthermore, the last Assembly of the League of Nations declared that an agreement between the leading naval Powers was necessary in order to prepare a general understanding with regard to the methods to be used for the reduction of naval armaments. The conversations already proceeding at the time appeared to that Assembly as being likely to lead to the resumption and completion of the interrupted work of the Preparatory Commission and ultimately to the calling of a general conference.

It is therefore primarily on principles and methods permitting of the subsequent drafting of a general convention for the limitation of armaments that the Powers meeting in London should, in the view of the French Government, come to an agreement.

The British Government has stated that the Government of the United States and itself had based their conversations on the Pact of Paris. The French Government, which has already had an opportunity of expressing the satisfaction with which it welcomed this statement, took too large a share in the working out of that Pact for it to be necessary for it to lay emphasis on the importance it attaches to it. The Pact is based on the force of public opinion, which is great. But its rational application has not yet been organised, it does not settle all the questions of peaceful procedure, of mutual assistance against an aggressor implied in the outlawry of war. It is undoubtedly a real step towards the preservation of peace, but it cannot be looked upon as sufficient in its present state to guarantee the security of nations.

It was this consideration, no doubt, that prevented the British Government from contemplating the substantial reduction of its naval armaments, and the United States Government from giving up the prompt execution of its latest naval programme. While both were in agreement as to the impossibility of any actual conflict between them, they were bound to consider that the primary task of their respective navies was to provide for the protection of their communications, which would not appear to rule out the hypothesis of their being ready to intervene in a conflict originating in the violation of solemn pledges.

Notwithstanding the significance ascribed to the Paris Pact, it was primarily on the Covenant of the League that the French Government, as well as the other Governments belonging to the League, undertook to base the limitation and reduction of their armaments, whereof naval armaments are but a part. Incomplete as are the measures adopted for carrying it into effect, the Covenant already provides the basis of a complete system of security, based upon the application of the methods of peaceful settlement and assistance to any State unlawfully attacked. Only in proportion to such assistance as they may be able to rely upon from without could the nations be in a position actually to reduce their armaments. Just as a general technical agreement upon armaments implies a previous political agreement, so does a complete naval agreement presuppose an understanding on the question of the freedom of the seas, defining the rights of belligerents and the rights of neutrals, and providing for the prospective co-operation of other fleets against that of an aggressor country.

However deeply it may regret the present situation, the French Government is nevertheless determined to extend its full assistance to the Powers meeting in London, with a view to the conclusion of such arrangements as may be in keeping with present possibilities.

The question of methods is no less important. In accordance with the example set by the Washington Conference, the Government of the United States and the British Government would appear to have contemplated the adoption of a method of assessing naval armaments dealing merely with the armaments of the five numerically most powerful navies and based on mathematical ratios. The experience, however, of the naval conference in Rome tends to remind us that the principles of the Washington Treaty met with a set-back when the League attempted, in 1924, to extend them to every navy, and it has frequently been demonstrated in Geneva that mere ratios do not permit of a rational application, appropriate for every State, of the principles laid down in Article 8 of the Covenant, which provides for a general reduction of armaments to a minimum compatible with the security of each State and with the international obligations imposed upon it according to its geographical position and its particular conditions.

In fact the Conference will fail to achieve its object to the full unless it makes it lead to a general agreement in Geneva as to the methods for the limitation of naval armaments.

II

It was necessary to recall the above general observations before proceeding to define the principles whereby the French Government will be guided in the London negotiations.

(1) It is upon Article 8 of the Covenant that the French Government, faithful to its pledged word, intends to base the reduction of its armaments. It is, indeed, upon this basis alone—a basis which does not imply the *a priori* application of mathematical ratios, and upon which the Preparatory Commission on Disarma- .

ment already based its work—that it would be possible, in its opinion, to work out an agreement acceptable to the Governments not represented in London.

On the lines of Article 8 two opposite methods for the limitation of naval armaments were suggested in Geneva, the one by total tonnage, the other by classes of ships. The stronger navies inclined to the latter method, while the rest were all in favour of the former. Desirous of reconciling these conflicting views, the French delegation proposed as early as April 1927, a compromise which met with the approval of all the navies that will not be represented in London and was sympathetically considered by several others.

The United States, in particular, took the opportunity on two separate occasions of publicly stating that it was willing to accept it as a basis for discussion. Under this arrangement the limitation of fleets by total tonnage was to be supplemented by measures of publicity concerning the distribution of that tonnage between the chief classes of ships and by rules for the transfer of tonnage from one class to another.

Such a system, which has the further advantage of permitting minor adjustments, may adapt itself the better to the needs of the projected understanding between the United States and British Governments in that it leaves any States that may desire it full liberty to bind themselves more closely as between themselves. In spite of its preference for the method of limitation by total tonnage, the French Government is willing to agree to this compromise, should it prove likely to lead to a general agreement.

(2) The preparatory work in Geneva has revealed the close interdependence that exists in a country's defensive armaments between its land, sea and air forces. The French Government has frequently had occasion to explain that this was a fundamental principle of its policy of national defence, and one the importance of which results in particular from the geographical position of France, a Power both continental and maritime, and the metropolis of a colonial empire spread out over the whole surface of the earth.

The French Government does not wish to find itself compelled to raise in London any questions relating to the limitation of land and air armaments, but it cannot conceal the fact that the tonnage required to meet the needs of its naval defence is closely related to its needs in land and air armaments, computed in accordance with the methods laid down by the Preparatory Commission at its last meeting. Were the decisions of the latter Commission again to be put in question, the particulars they will afford as regards their naval armaments would become utterly valueless.

The French Government desires to state, moreover, that these difficulties will not prevent it from seeking any such solutions as would allow any Powers desirous of doing so and being of opinion that they could do so without danger to enter into a binding agreement as between themselves, without awaiting the conclusion of a general convention for the limitation of all armaments.

(3) Subject to the preceding observations, the French delegation will have no difficulty in making known the importance of the ton-

nage corresponding with the national needs of France, taking into account her geographical position on three seas, the extent of a colonial empire with an area of 11,000,000 square kilometres, populated by 60,000,000 inhabitants, and a trade amounting to 32,000,000,000 francs

The existence of such an empire, the necessity of providing for the separate defence of each of the big communities it comprises, the many political and economical ties which bind these big communities to each other and to the mother country, the need to protect the integrity and economic life of the latter, the task of providing for the security of more than 30,000 kilometres of seaboard, all told, impose upon the French Navy duties which the French Government cannot ignore when it is called upon to apply Article 8 of the Covenant. The French naval Budget is lower to-day than it was in 1914, and the same desire of strict moderation will continue to inspire France in the appreciation of her needs, and in computing the forces necessary to meet them.

In this respect the French Government will take fully into account any guarantee of security that might be made, and which would give full effect to the undertakings of international solidarity against an aggressor contained in Article 16 of the Covenant.

(4) Moreover, remembering the beneficial effects produced by the Pacific Treaty on the conclusion of the Washington naval agreements, the French Government considers that in a narrower field, but one in which most of the European fleets are concerned, some progress might be achieved. Its communications through the Mediterranean are of an importance for the British Empire which the French Government by no means disregards. They are equally vital for France. Might not an agreement of mutual guarantee and non-aggression be negotiated between the Mediterranean naval Powers, to which those not represented in London would be associated, and first and foremost a Power like Spain, on the importance of whose naval interests in the Mediterranean emphasis need hardly be laid? The French Government asks this question, declaring itself in favour of the principle of such an agreement, because it is earnestly desirous of bringing about a reduction of naval armaments.

As a conclusion to this statement of the general views suggested to it by a study of the agenda of the Conference, the French Government desires to state that none of the difficulties to which it has thought it necessary to draw attention appears to it to be insuperable. Convinced that all the Governments that are to meet in London will enter upon these discussions with the same will as themselves to co-operate sincerely in giving effect to such means as may lead to the overcoming of every difficulty, the French Government relies upon the success of a negotiation that will pave the way for such a general conference for the limitation and reduction of armaments as alone seems capable of fulfilling the common will of the nations to organise peace.

VII FRENCH STATUT NAVAL

(*Projet de loi* deposited with the Chamber, the 16th December, 1924)

The following are the more important details of the *Statut Naval* of 1924 governing the constitution of the French Fleet. It was designed to give the figures to which the estimates for each year, from 1922 inclusive, should work, but has never been formally adopted by Parliament.

(a) The essential constitution of the French fleet is laid down as follows (Article I)

Battle Fleet

1	<i>Capital Ships</i>	175,000 tons (as provided by the Washington Treaty)
2	<i>Capital Ships (Aircraft Carriers)</i>	60,000 tons (as provided by the Washington Treaty)
3.	<i>Light Surface Ships</i> (under 10,000 tons)	
	Cruisers	} = 360,000 tons
	Destroyers	
	Torpedo Boats	
4	<i>Submarines</i>	96,000 tons.

Non-combatant Ships

1	<i>Repair Ship</i>
2	<i>Minelayers</i>
2	<i>Submarine Dépôt Ships</i>
2	<i>Aircraft Transports</i>
2	<i>Netlayers</i>
	Scouts, Coal and Petrol Transports, Instruction Ships, Service Ships, Hydrographic Ships and Fishing Guard-ships.

(b) The life of ships is stated as follows (Article III)

Capital Ships ..	20 years
Cruisers ..	17 years
Destroyers	15 years
Submarines	12 years

(c) Construction is to be carried out as follows (Article X)

"The constitution of the fleet provided for in Article I of the present law must be accomplished by successive stages, each being the subject of a special law requiring the allotment of the necessary credits and defining the number of units to be laid down in each class of ship,"

VIII NAVIES OF THE FIVE PRINCIPAL POWERS *

A TABLES SHOWING NUMBERS OF VESSELS OF THE VARIOUS CLASSES

	BRITISH EMPIRE	UNITED STATES	JAPAN	FRANCE	ITALY.
	BUILT.				
Battleships	16	18	6	9	4
Battle Cruisers	4	—	4	—	—
Cruisers	54	14 ¹	37 ²	17 ³	13 ⁴
Aircraft Carriers	8	3	5 ⁵	1	1
Flotilla Loaders	16	—	—	9	20
Destroyers	134	309 ⁶	106 ⁷	58 ⁸	63 ⁹
Submarines	53	122 ¹⁰	64	52 ¹¹	43 ¹²
Sloops	31	—	—	8	22

¹ 4 obsolete² 8 obsolete³ 5 obsolete and *Edgar Quinet* which was wrecked on 4th January, 1930⁴ 2 obsolete⁵ 1 obsolete⁶ 24 obsolete, 61 listed for disposal⁷ 4 obsolete.⁸ 7 obsolete⁹ 4 obsolete¹⁰ 17 obsolete¹¹ 11 obsolete¹² 7 obsolete

B TABLES OF CRUISER TONNAGE, ETC

The following tables show the approximate position of the cruiser fleets of the principal naval Powers as at 1st January, 1930. The vessels shown in italics are not yet in commission, but the construction work on these is well advanced.

GREAT BRITAIN

Large Cruisers				
Vessels.	Tonnage	Names.	Guns.	
York Class	2	8,400	York, Exeter	6-8"
London Class	4	10,000	{ London, Sussex, Devon- shire, Shropshire }	8-8"
Norfolk Class	2 ¹	10,000	Derbyshire, Norfolk	8-8"
Kent Class	5	10,000	{ Kent, Berwick, Cornwall, Cumberland, Suffolk }	8-8"
Improved Birming- ham Class	4 ² (approx)	9,850	{ Effingham, Frobisher, Hawkins, Vindictive }	7-7 5" 6-7 5"

¹ Originally there were to have been four ships of this class, but the British Government decided in 1929 to suspend the building of two of them

² In 1936 (the year in which parity with the U.S.A. is to be achieved) Hawkins will be seventeen and Vindictive eighteen years old

* The figures given in these tables are based on British White Paper, Cmd 3464 of 1930 2s

<i>Small Cruisers</i>				
	Vessels	Tonnage	Names	Guns
E Class	2	7,500 (approx)	Emerald, Enterprise	7-6"
D Class	6	4,850	{ Despatch, Delhi, Durban, Dante, Dragon, Daunt less }	6-6"
Impreved C Class	13	4,200 4,290 4,180	{ Carlisle type (5) Ceres type (5) Caledon type (3) }	5-6"
C Class	11	4,120 3,920 3,895	{ Centaur type (2) Cambrian type (6) Caroline type (3) }	4-6"
Chatham Class	2	5,120	Lowestoft, Birmingham	9-8"
Weymouth Class	1	4,860	Dartmouth	8-8"

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

Kent Class	2	10,000	Australia, Canberra	8-8"
Adelaide Class	1	5,100	Adelaide	9-8"
Chatham Class	1	5,120	Brisbane	8-8"
NEW ZEALAND DIVISION OF ROYAL NAVY				
D Class	2	4,850	Diomede, Dunedin	6-6"

NOTE.—The *D* and *C* classes of cruiser were all laid down before or during the War, while the *Chatham* and *Weymouth* classes are of pre-War construction.

Of the total British Empire cruisers, large and small, only fifteen are of post-War design and only twenty-one are capable of steaming 30 knots.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

	Vessels	Tonnage	Names	Guns
Augusta Class	6	10,000	{ <i>Augusta</i> , <i>Chester</i> , <i>Ch.-</i> <i>cago</i> , <i>Houston</i> , <i>Louis-</i> <i>ville</i> , <i>Northampton</i> }	9-8"
Pensacola Class	2	10,000	<i>Pensacola</i> , <i>Salt Lake City</i>	10-8"
Omaha Class	10	7,050	Omaha and 9 others	12-6"
Denver Class	2	2,693	Denver, Galveston	8-5"
Huntingden Class	2	12,715 7,400	{ <i>Pittsburg</i> <i>Rochester</i> }	4-8"

NOTE.—Five more vessels of the *Augusta* class were authorised in the fiscal year 1928-29 and should have been laid down before the 1st July, 1929, but actually only two have been begun to date. The Navy Estimates laid before Congress on the 2nd December, 1929, included provision for commencing construction work on the other three some time during the first six months of 1930 and for a further ten to be laid down late in the fiscal year 1930-31. This makes up the fifteen "light cruisers" sanctioned by the Bill of 13th February, 1929.

Three of the six vessels of the *Augusta* class shown above in italics will be in commission in 1931. They were authorised for construction in 1926-27 by the Bill of the 18th December, 1924.

All the thirty-three cruisers built, building or projected have a speed of $32\frac{1}{2}$ knots or over, and the majority are of post-War design. This excludes the four vessels of the *Denver* and *Huntingdon* classes, which are obsolete.

JAPAN

	Vessels	Tonnage	Names	Guns
Nachi Class	4	10,000	{ Nachi, Ashigara, } Haguro, Myoko	10-8"
Myoko Class	4	10,000	{ Atago, Takao, } Chokai, Maya	10-8"
Furutaka Class	4	7,100	{ Kinugasa, Aoba } Kako, Furutaka	6-8"
Nisshin Class	2	7,080	{ Nisshin Kasuga }	4-8" 2-8", 1-10"
Kinu Class	3	5,195	Jintsu, Naka, Sendai	7-5 5"
Natori Class	6	5,170	Natori, and 5 others	7-5 5"
Kuma Class	5	5,100	Kuma, and 4 others	7-5 5"
Yubari	1	2,890		6-5 5"
Tenryu Class	2	3,230	Tenryu, Tatsuta	4-5 5"
Chikuma Class	3	4,400	Hirado and 2 others	8-6"
Tone	1	4,100		2-6"
Old 1st Class	5	9,500	{ Yakumo, Adzuma, } (approx) Asama, Iwate, Idzuma	4-8"
Tsusuma	1	3,120		6-6"

The cruiser programme includes four 10,000-ton 8-inch-gun vessels to be built to replace the old 1st class cruisers which are now thirty years old, but it has been decided not to lay these four down pending the results of the London Naval Conference.

The *Atago*, *Chokai*, *Takao* and *Maya* are not yet in commission. In addition to the ships in the old 1st Class, the *Nisshin*, *Kasuga* and *Tsusuma* are obsolete, and the *Tone* will be 20 years old in May, 1930.

FRANCE.

	Vessels	Tonnage	Names	Guns
Tourville Class	6	10,000	{ Tourville, Suffren, Du- quesne, Colbert, Foch, Dupleix }	8-8"
Duguay-Trouin Class	3	7,249	{ Duguay-Trouin, Lamotte Piquet, Pimouguet }	8-6 1"
Metz Class	1	5,265		8-5 9"
Strasbourg Class	1	4,724		7-5 9"
Thionville Class	1	2,923		9-3 9"
Mulhouse Class	1	4,527		7-5 9"

NOTE.—The *Foch*, *Dupleix*, and *Colbert* are not yet in commission. The *Metz* was completed in 1916, the *Strasbourg* and *Thionville* in 1914, and the *Mulhouse* in 1912. France has also the *Ernest Renan* (12,234), completed in 1909, the *Waldeck-Rousseau* (12,618) and *Edgar Quinet*¹ (12,618), completed in 1911, and the *Conde* (8,759) and *Gueydon* (8,189), completed in 1904 and 1903 respectively.

France also has building a training cruiser, *Jeanne d'Arc*, of 6,496 tons, carrying 8-6 1" guns.

¹ The *Edgar Quinet* was wrecked on 4th January, 1930.

ITALY.

	Vessels	Tonnage	Names	Guns
Zara Class	4	10,000	{ <i>Zara</i> , <i>Fiume</i> , <i>Bolzano</i> , <i>Gorizia</i> }	8-8"
Trento Class	2	10,000	Trento, Trieste	8-8"
Condottieri Class	6	5,000 (approx.)	Condottiere and 5 others (all building)	8-6"
San Giorgio Class	2	9,300 (approx.)	San Giorgio, San Marco	4-10"
Pisa Class	1	10,265		4-10"
Bari Class	1	3,248		8-5 9"
Ancona Class	1	3,838		7-5 9"
Taranto Class	1	3,184		7-5 9"
Brindisi Class	2	2,756	Brindisi, Venezia	9-3 9"
Quarto		2,903		6-4 7"
Libia		3,700		8-4 7"
Francesco Ferruccio		6,299		1-10", 4-6"

NOTE.—The construction of the four vessels of the *Zara* class was only begun in 1928-29.

The *San Giorgio* and *San Marco* are obsolete, and are rated as 2nd class battleships. The *Pisa* and the *Francesco Ferruccio* are obsolete, and all the others were completed before the War, except the six cruisers of the *Condottieri* class, which were all laid down in 1928-29, and the two of the *Trento* class, which were completed in 1928.

C SUMMARY OF CRUISER STRENGTHS

	BRITISH EMPIRE	U.S.A.	JAPAN	FRANCE	ITALY
10,000 ton Cruisers ¹					
Built	110,000	10,000 ⁴	40,000	42,618 ⁸	38,582 ⁹
Building	20,000	170,000 ⁵	40,000	30,000	40,000
Projected	Nil ⁸	50,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other Cruisers ²					
Built	217,111	70,500 ⁶	127,150 ⁷	39,188	22,385 ¹⁰
Building	16,800 ³	Nil	Nil	6,496	29,602
Projected	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total Tonnage of 10,000-ton and other Cruisers					
Built	327,111	80,500	231,272	81,804	60,967
Building	36,800	170,000	40,000	36,496	69,602
Projected	Nil	50,000	Nil	Nil	Nil

¹ All carry 8-in guns

² The two 10,000-ton cruisers, which were authorised in the 1928 building programme, but whose construction has been suspended, have not been included.

³ These are two cruisers of 8,400 tons each, carrying 8-in guns. They are practically completed.

⁴ The *Salt Lake City*, laid down in 1927 and completed in 1929. The *Pittsburg* (12,715 tons) was completed in 1905, and is therefore obsolete and is not included.

⁵ Of these, seven were laid down in 1926-28 and ten are authorised but not yet laid down.

⁶ Includes ten of the *Omaha* type (7,050 tons), laid down in 1918-20. Does not include the *Rochester* (7,400 tons), completed 1893, nor the *Denver* and *Galveston* (2,693 tons), completed 1904 and 1905.

D TABLE OF SUBMARINE STRENGTHS

			Total.
Great Britain	51	10 building ..	63
Australia ..	2		
United States	122	5 building	127
Japan ..	64	7 building	71
France	52	47 building	99
Italy ..	43	14 building ..	57

Details of above

Great Britain Includes 1 cruiser submarine (XI of 2,500 tons) and 36 overseas patrol boats (tonnage between 890 and 1,550), also 14 coast defence vessels.

(NOTE — 2 M class and 1 K class submarines are considered as overseas patrols)

United States Includes 1 minelaying submarine of 2,900 tons and 5 Fleet submarines of between 2,000 and 3,000 tons 52 are overseas patrol boats (tonnage between 850 and 1,100) 45 are old

Japan. All Japan's submarines are overseas patrol boats (tonnage between 700 and 1,650), except 4 which are of 1,970 tons

France Includes 1 cruiser submarine (*Surcouf* of 2,800 tons) and 54 overseas patrol boats (tonnage between 800 and 1,550) and 38 coastal defence vessels, of approximately 600 tons

Italy Includes 36 overseas patrol boats and 25 coastal defence vessels of under 500 tons.

⁷ Includes four *Iurutaka* type (7,100 tons) Does not include two *Kasuga* type (7,080 tons) laid down in 1902, and five of the old first class laid down 1896-98, i.e. two *Iwate* type (9,180 tons), *Yakumo* (9,010 tons), *Adzuma* (9,227 tons), *Asama* (9,240 tons) All the above carry 8-in guns The total also does not include the *Tsushima* (3,120 tons).

⁸ Includes the *Waddeck Rousseau* (12,618 tons), laid down in 1908 Does not include the *Ernest Renan* (12,234 tons), completed in 1909, the *Jules Michelet* (11,072), completed in 1908, the *Jeanne d'Arc* (9,743 tons) and the *Gueydon* (8,189 tons), completed in 1903, and the *Conde* (8,759 tons), completed in 1904 The *Edgar Quinet* (12,618 tons), which was wrecked on the 4th January, 1930, is also not included

⁹ Includes the *San Giorgio* (9,232 tons), completed in 1910, and the *San Marco* (9,350 tons), completed in 1911, both armed with 10-in guns and classified as second class battleships in the Italian official lists Does not include the training ship *Pisa* (10,265 tons), completed in 1909

¹⁰ Does not include the *Francesco Ferruccio* (6,299 tons), completed in 1905

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